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# HISTORY of WAR



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DARK SECRETS OF THE FIERCE FIGHT FOR LIBERTY

**PLUS:**

- Siege of Tyre
- Nimrod MR2
- War elephants



## ALFRED'S VIKING WAR

Anglo-Saxon guerilla tactics



# THE RED BARON

Uncover the terrible truth behind WWI's deadliest fighter ace

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ISSUE 022  
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## ALEXANDER THE GREAT

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# Welcome

**“I believe that war is not how people at home imagine it... it is very grim”**

– Manfred von Richthofen

**W**hen British troops finally brought the infamous Red Baron's dominance of the skies to an end, they laid a wreath on his grave that read: “Our gallant and worthy foe.”

This was a man who had earned celebrity status from shooting dozens of their comrades out of the sky, but nonetheless it was decided he deserved the utmost respect.

Richthofen had to employ simple but brutal tactics to survive, as well as to kill, and soon came to be disillusioned with the barbarity of the war.

This issue's cover feature unravels the myth of chivalrous

knights doing honourable battle in the skies over the trenches. The “grim” reality, as Manfred put it, was far removed from people's idealised imaginings.



*Tim*

**Tim Williamson**  
Editor



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## CONTRIBUTORS



**EDOARDO ALBERT**

Renowned writer and historian Edoardo is the author of a host of acclaimed titles on the Anglo-Saxon era. This issue he takes us inside the military mind of Alfred the Great, amid his fight to expel the Vikings (page 36).



**NICK SOLDINGER**

Nick's back to delve into the darker side of military history. This issue he turns iconoclast in his feature on the Red Baron, dispelling the myth of the chivalrous flier and exploring the brutal tactics behind WWI's top fighter ace (page 26).



**JACK GRIFFITHS**

In his swan-song issue on the **History of War** team, Jack takes an alternative look at the French Resistance. On page 44, he explores the untold role of foreign fighters, communists and women in the nation's secretive struggle for liberty.

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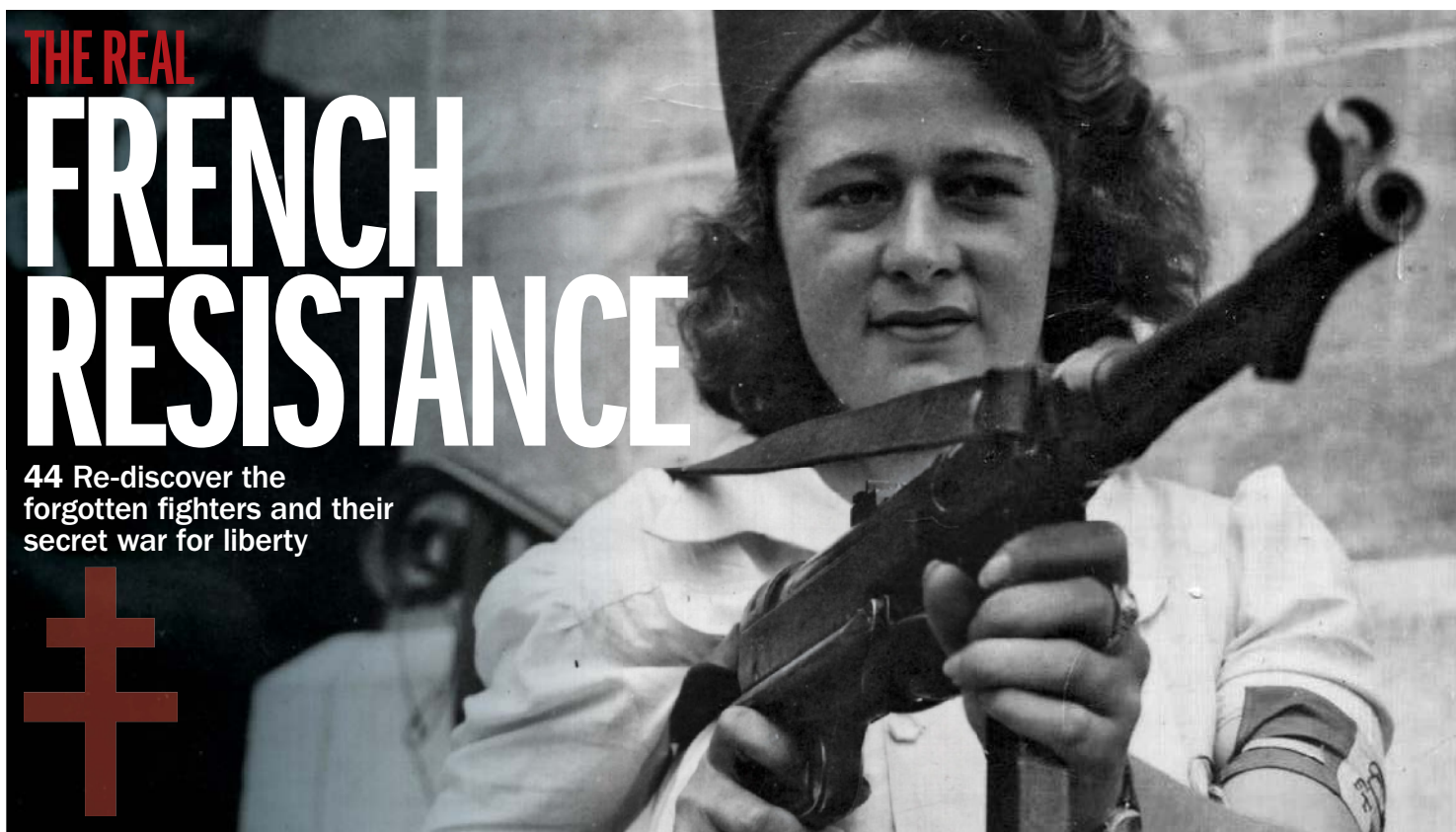


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THE REAL

# FRENCH RESISTANCE

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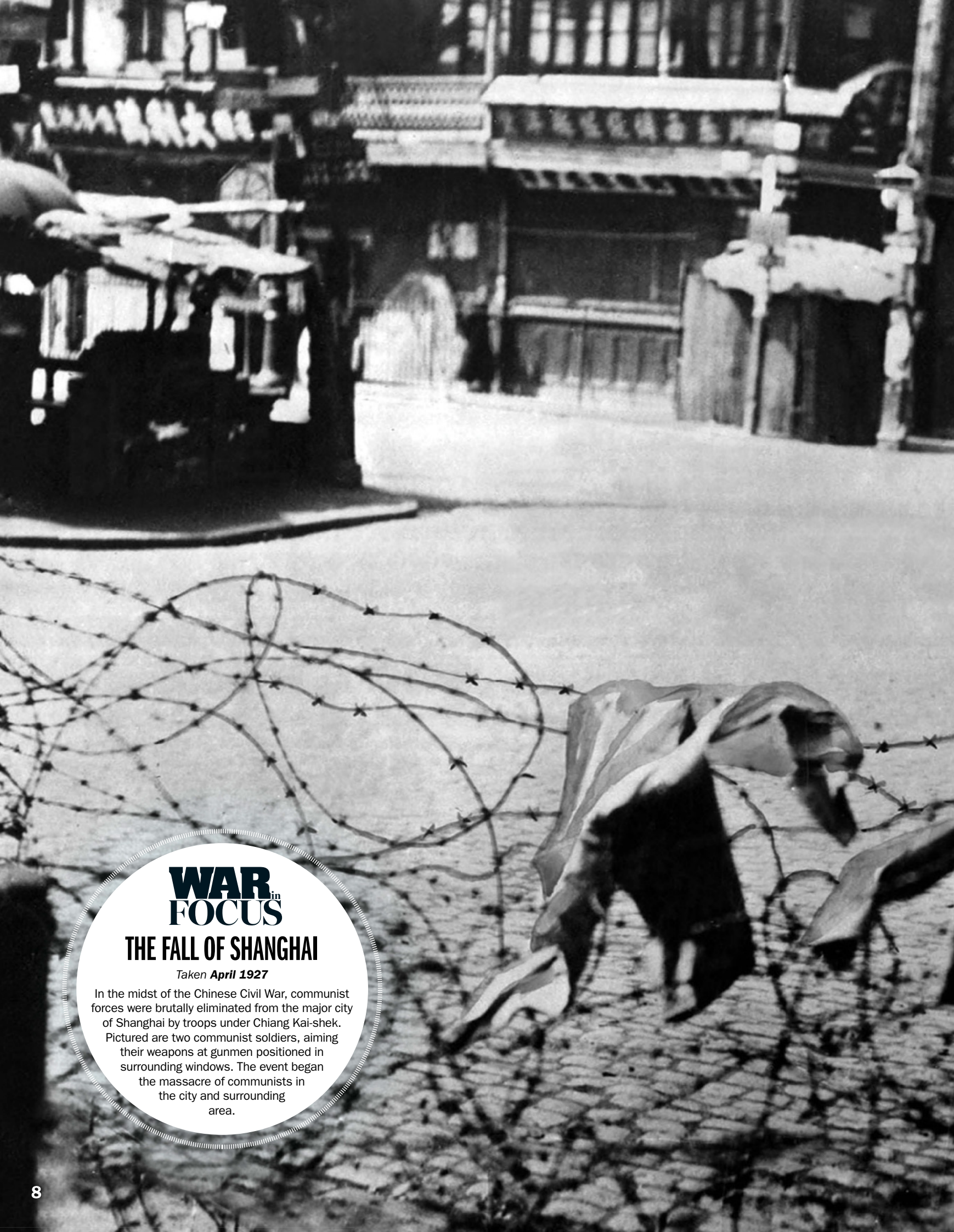


# **WAR**<sup>in</sup> **FOCUS**

## **FOR THE DEAR LEADER**

*Taken 15 July 2014*

A shell-firing exercise is conducted near Pyongyang, the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), under the watchful eye of Kim Jong-un. Still technically at war with its neighbour to the south, the DPRK regularly conducts military exercises close to its borders, in order to demonstrate its capacity, and will, to fight.



**WAR**<sub>in</sub>  
**FOCUS**

**THE FALL OF SHANGHAI**

*Taken April 1927*

In the midst of the Chinese Civil War, communist forces were brutally eliminated from the major city of Shanghai by troops under Chiang Kai-shek. Pictured are two communist soldiers, aiming their weapons at gunmen positioned in surrounding windows. The event began the massacre of communists in the city and surrounding area.







# WAR<sup>in</sup> FOCUS

## A WINTER WARMER

*Taken December 1944*

From left to right, Private RW Fierdo, Staff Sergeant Adam J Celinca and Technical Sergeant WO Thomas man their foxhole near the village of St Vith, Belgium. The desperate defence of the village by American troops lasted six days, before the advancing Wehrmacht swept away the Allies. The retreat was hampered by congested roads.





# ALEXANDER THE GREAT

In 13 short years of bloodshed and flame, Alexander carved out an empire that stretched from the Adriatic to India



## ALEXANDER'S EARLY YEARS

A ROYAL BUT DISRUPTIVE UPBRINGING  
**356-336 BCE Macedonia**

The young prince is born to an estranged husband and wife but still manages to obtain different skills from both his father and mother that will help him in his later life. Alexander acquires his father's military leadership skills but also attains his mother's ambition and vengeful nature.

*Left: When Alexander was 13, his father hired Aristotle as his son's personal tutor. Alexander studied under one of Ancient Greece's greatest philosophers for the next three years*

**"ALEXANDER ACQUIRES HIS FATHER'S MILITARY LEADERSHIP SKILLS BUT ALSO ATTAINS HIS MOTHER'S AMBITION AND VENGEFUL NATURE"**

## INVADING THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

VICTORY AFTER VICTORY AGAINST ALL THE ODDS

**333 BCE Asia Minor**

With homeland security taken care of in Greece, Alexander turns his armies east against the Persian Empire. Conquering everything in his path, his most impressive victory comes at Issus in 333 BCE against King Darius III. Alexander, fearlessly leading his army from the front, routs his enemy despite being outnumbered five to one.

*The Battle of Issus marked the beginning of the end for the Achaemenid Empire*



## A NEW KING IS CROWNED

A LEGENDARY MONARCHY FORGED IN TRAGEDY

**336 BCE Pella, Macedonia**

After Alexander's father King Phillip II is treacherously murdered, Alexander ascends to the throne of Macedonia at the age of 20. The empire he inherits, which stretches from the Black Sea in the east to the Adriatic in the west and incorporates most of the Balkans, is on the brink of collapse.

*The political map of Greece and Persia at the crowning of Alexander*



## ALEXANDER BECOMES GREAT

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE IS CONQUERED

**331 BCE The Middle East**

With the Persians on the run, Alexander sweeps through into Egypt and then turns north into Syria and present-day Iraq. Here, at the Battle of Gaugamela, he and Darius have their final showdown. A defeated Darius flees only to be murdered by his own men. The empire is now Alexander's.

*Below: A decisive Macedonian victory in the war, Gaugamela would be the last time Alexander and Darius would meet on the battlefield*





Above: As he marched further east, Alexander and his men would come up against a new fear, war elephants

## A JOURNEY TO THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

THE LONGEST MARCH IN ANTIQUITY

326 BCE Western Asia

Determined to conquer the entire world, Alexander pushes further into unknown territory. Continuing into the vast plains of present-day Afghanistan, he reaches the Indus River and then the Punjab. Here, 9,650 kilometres (6,000 miles), from home, his battle-weary men, unable to match the appetite of their insatiable leader, refuse to march on.

## GENETICALLY ENGINEERING AN EMPIRE

MARRYING WEST TO EAST

325 BCE Middle East/Asia

As his armies return home, Alexander has many of his officers marry Persian noblewomen to help solidify his reign over this vast new empire. His rule of Persia is met with disapproval from his own people, and Alexander, to them, is no longer a Macedonian. He has become something foreign.

Below: Alexander disposed of anyone who was a threat to his leadership, including Persian satraps (governors) like Bessus



## A MYSTERIOUS DEATH

A MYSTERY ILLNESS GRIPS THE EMPEROR AND LEAVES HIM BEDRIDDEN FOR TEN DAYS UNTIL HIS DEATH

323 BCE Palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, Babylon

Alexander dies in suspicious circumstances aged just 32. Conflicting accounts of what might have killed him emerge. Both a fever and a drinking binge are blamed but poisoning seems more likely. The truth, however, dies with him.

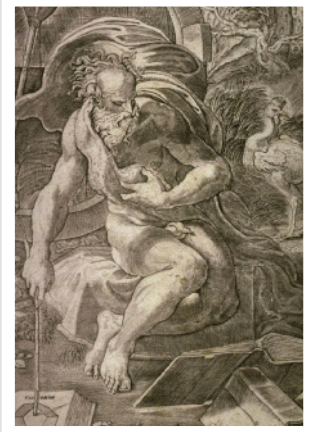
The story of Alexander's death is shrouded in mystery but his demise will always be remembered for the power vacuum it left in the Hellenistic world



# 5 Facts About ALEXANDER THE GREAT

### ALEXANDER'S TRUE NEMESIS?

A Greek cynic philosopher, Diogenes of Sinope, famously told Alexander to "get out of my sunlight." Alexander admired his spirit and said: "If I were not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes."



Above: Alexander was reported to be thrilled to meet Diogenes

### HE NAMED MORE THAN 20 CITIES AFTER HIMSELF

Alexandria in Egypt is the best known city that Alexander named after himself, but there are others splattered all over his former empire - in Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Kuwait, and beyond.

### HE NAMED A NEW CITY AFTER HIS HORSE

When his horse was killed at the Battle of Hydaspes - the costliest victory of Alexander's Indian campaign - he founded a city and named it Bucephala in the dead stallion's honour.

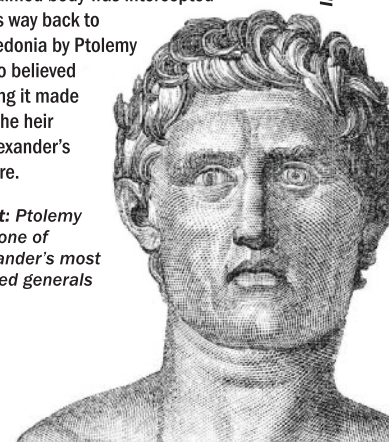
### HE WENT NATIVE

After conquering the Persians, Alexander gradually became more assimilated into their culture, even dressing in a striped tunic, girdle and crown like a Persian royal. He also took two Persian wives.

### HIS BODY WAS HIJACKED

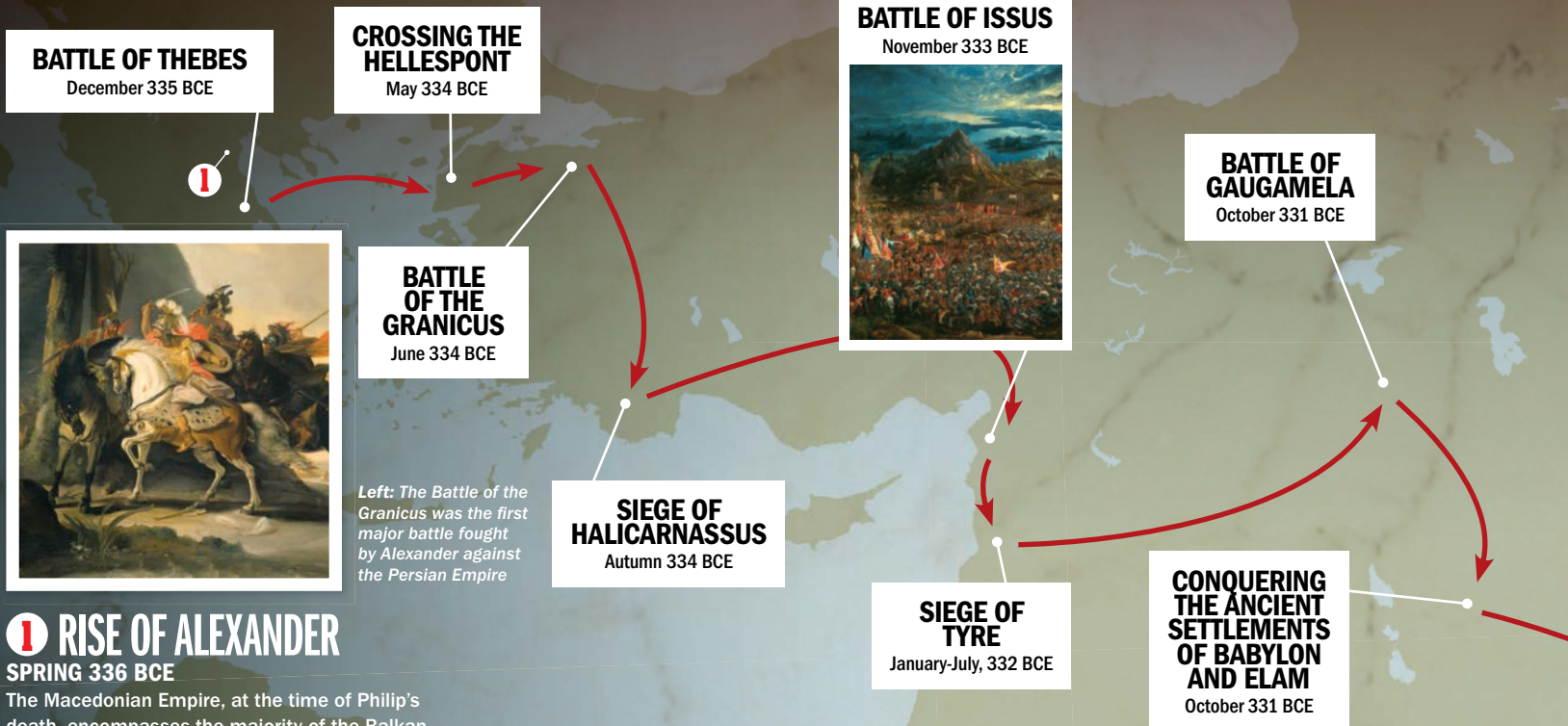
Two years after his death, Alexander's embalmed body was intercepted on its way back to Macedonia by Ptolemy I, who believed owning it made him the heir to Alexander's empire.

Right: Ptolemy was one of Alexander's most trusted generals



# WORLD CONQUEST

A bloody 13-year war saw Macedonia grow as a military power and reduce the mighty Achaemenid Empire to ruin

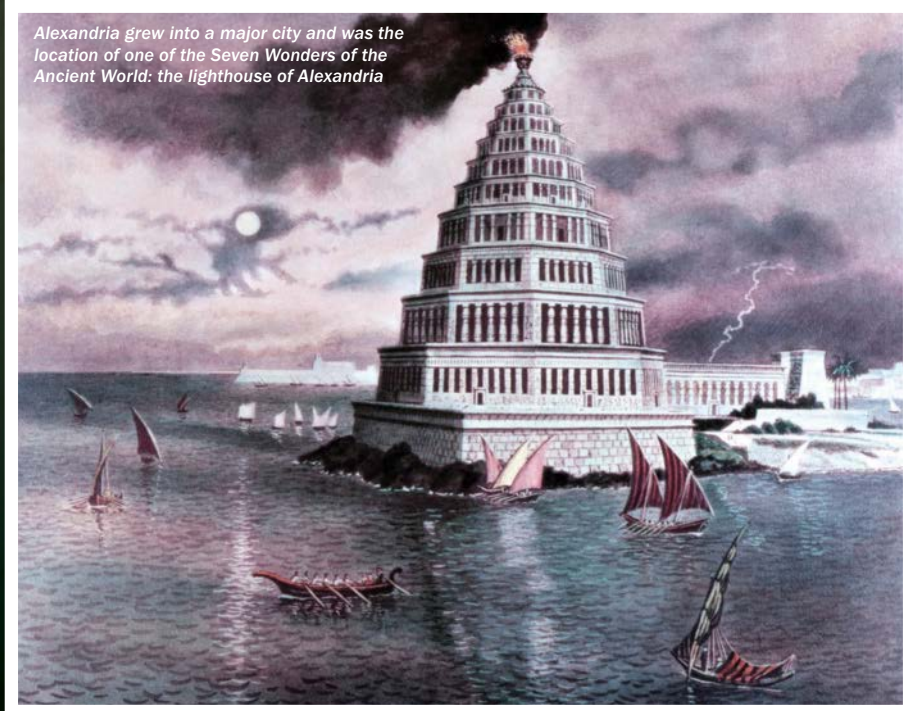


**BATTLE OF THE GRANICUS**  
June 334 BCE

Left: The Battle of the Granicus was the first major battle fought by Alexander against the Persian Empire

## 1 RISE OF ALEXANDER

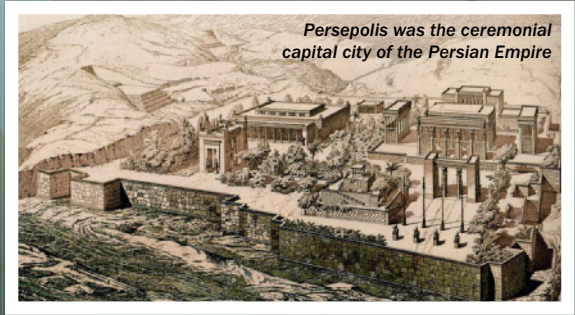
**SPRING 336 BCE**  
The Macedonian Empire, at the time of Philip's death, encompasses the majority of the Balkan Peninsula, and Alexander takes on his father's plans for conquest into Asia.



Alexandria grew into a major city and was the location of one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World: the lighthouse of Alexandria

## 2 THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION

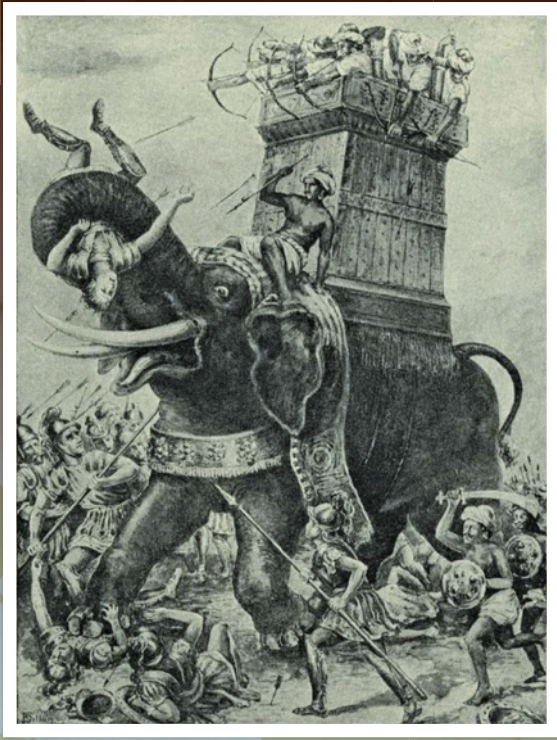
**APRIL 331 BCE**  
Fighting his way through Persia and Phoenicia, Alexander turns south to Egypt and founds Alexandria, which would become a major centre of commerce and culture in the ancient world.



Persepolis was the ceremonial capital city of the Persian Empire

## 3 BURNING OF PERSEPOLIS

**JANUARY 330 BCE**  
Upon conquering the capital of the Achaemenid Empire, the Macedonians and Greeks burn it to the ground as an act of revenge for the destruction of the Parthenon by Xerxes in the Greco-Persian Wars.



## 5 EASTERN EXPANSION

327-326 BCE

After years of war, the Macedonian soldiers are at breaking point, but still manage to reach India and fight against local warlords such as Porus, king of the Pauravas.

## 6 HYPHESIS MUTINY

SUMMER 326 BCE

Taking the advice of his exhausted companions, Alexander reluctantly turns back before reaching the Ganges Valley. The decision is met with jubilation from his troops.

**SIEGE OF THE SOGDIAN ROCK MOUNTAIN FORTRESS**  
Spring 327 BCE

**CAPTURE OF BESSUS**  
June 329 BCE

**MARCH ACROSS THE HINDU KUSH**  
May 329 BCE

*Left: As they continued eastwards, the Macedonians encountered elephants that would strike fear into even the most experienced phalanx*

**ADVANCE TO INDIA**  
327-326 BCE

**VICTORY OVER KING PORUS**  
May 326 BCE

## 7 DEATH OF HEPHAESTION

OCTOBER 324 BCE

Alexander's closest friend and commander of the cavalry, Hephaestion, dies of a fever in Ecbatana. He had served with distinction throughout many campaigns, and Alexander is plunged into grief.

**DEATH OF ALEXANDER**  
June 323 BCE

**BATTLE OF THE PERSIAN GATE**  
January 330 BCE

**RETREAT HOME**  
Summer 326-324 BCE

*Below, left: Ancient 'Stater' coins were made with Philip III Arrhidaeus's image on but the power struggle continued for decades with no outright leader emerging from Alexander's shadow*

## 4 REACHING THE CASPIAN SEA

AUTUMN 330 BCE

Alexander's army has crippled the Persian military and has now travelled as far as the Caspian Sea. In the coming years, they would march further east into the uncharted territories of India.

## 8 WARS OF THE DIADOCHI

322-275 BCE

Alexander's death fractures the empire. The former emperor's generals fight over territory as the Macedonian Empire dissolves and leaves itself vulnerable to the rise of Rome.



# ANATOMY OF A... PERSIAN WAR ELEPHANT

The tanks of the ancient world, the threat posed by war elephants was too daunting for even Alexander the Great

## WOODEN STAKE AND MALLET

When wounded or frightened by the noise and chaos of combat, elephants were known to break ranks and crush their own troops. The mahout carried a stake to drive through the elephant's spine in the event of that happening.

## THE MAHOUT

Elephants were hired as mercenary troops along with their mahouts, whose job it was to train and maintain the animal as well as ride it into battle. Often Indian in origin, these men wore no armour and were vulnerable to attack from arrows.

## PELTAST

The peltast was armed with a zhubin – a short, bronze-tipped Persian spear made of date-palm wood or thick reed that was ideal for throwing and repelling close-quarters attacks. Adopted by Alexander, the zhubin was taken to Europe and renamed 'javelin'.

## ARCHER

Up to two archers occupied the howdah. Their bows were made from wood that was curved at either end. This shorter bow was easier to use in confined spaces while generating greater power than a straight one.

## HOWDAH

This large fortified wooden turret was used to carry soldiers and, during battle, to operate as an elevated fighting platform. At about four metres (13 feet) above the battlefield, it proved an advantageous position for archers to snipe from.

## HOWDAH BINDING ROPES

A means to climb in

## SHIELDS

The soldiers inside the howdah would hang their shields on the outside of the turret's wooden walls. Made from sticks bound together and covered with animal skin, they offered extra protection against arrows.

## BELLS

For decorative effect

## HEAD CAPARISON

Also made from thick red felt, the head caparison was essentially a protective hood. Placed over the top of the elephant's head, it shielded its skull from arrows and other missiles, although it was of little use against javelins.

## CAPARISON

This heavy large square carpet covered most of the elephant's body and was secured with a rope girth. Part ornamental, part armour, it was made from thick red felt several centimetres thick, providing protection against arrows and slingshots.

## THE ELEPHANT CHARGE

Alexander first encountered war elephants at the Battle of Gaugamela in 331 BCE. Although his men had heard tales of these beasts before, few had encountered one. On the eve of battle, the Persians moved their war elephants into plain view of Alexander's troops to spook them. It worked, and that night as his men said their battle prayers, Alexander made a sacrifice to the god of fear. After his victory, Alexander adopted the war elephant as a weapon but he couldn't match the huge numbers owned by rulers of the lands further east, so his advance into India was halted.



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# THE SIEGE OF TYRE

## 332 BCE

Alexander's siege machines face their toughest challenge yet as they fall upon the heavily fortified island city

**T**wo months after defeating his nemesis Darius III at the Battle of Issus, Alexander turned his attention to the eastern Mediterranean coast. Home to the ancient maritime power of Phoenicia, it was a vital area of operations for the Persian navy. The Macedonians conquered the city-states one by one through a combination of brute force and promises of protection, but one city that didn't submit so easily was the island fortress of Tyre. A Macedonian victory here could ease the conquest of the remainder of the coastline, but a defeat would be a hammerblow to Alexander's vision of controlling the seas.

**"THE MACEDONIANS CONQUERED THE CITY-STATES ONE BY ONE THROUGH A COMBINATION OF BRUTE FORCE AND PROMISES OF PROTECTION, BUT ONE CITY THAT DIDN'T SUBMIT SO EASILY WAS THE ISLAND FORTRESS OF TYRE"**

*Below: Although they looked menacing, Alexander's siege towers were quickly defeated by the resourceful Tyrians*



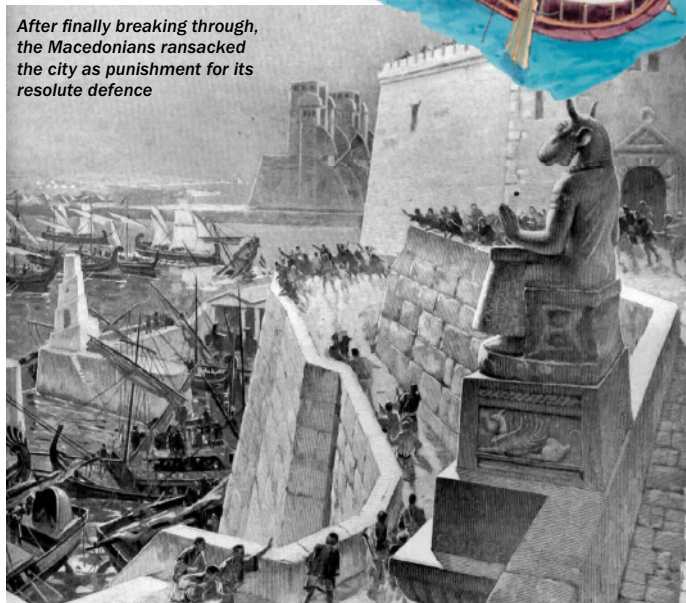
## THE AFTERMATH

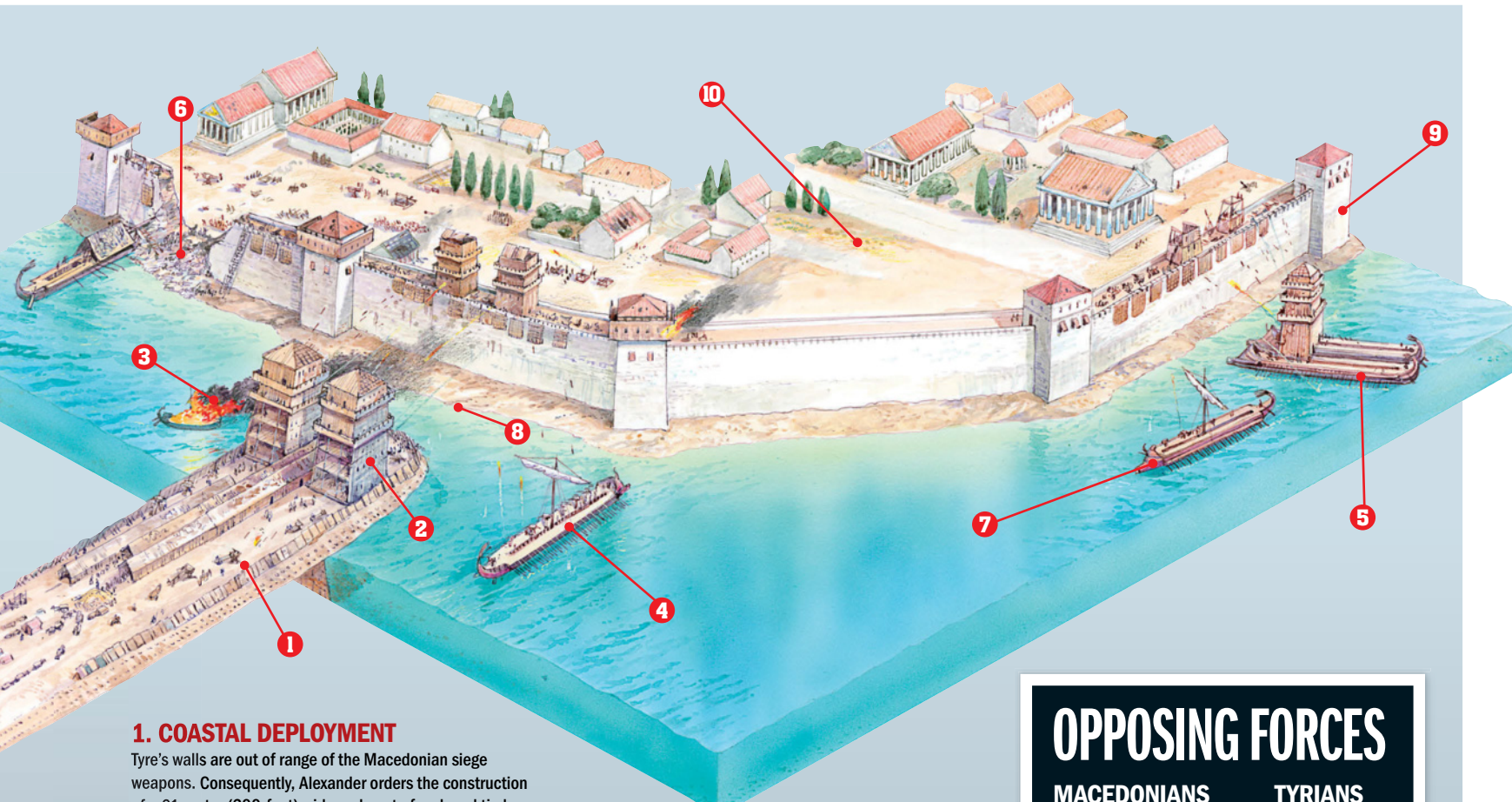
**TYRE WAS A COSTLY VICTORY BUT IT SENT SHOCKWAVES THROUGH THE ANCIENT WORLD AS ALEXANDER'S POWER GREW TO EVEN GREATER HEIGHTS**

Approximately 400 Macedonians died as the siege became much harder than first anticipated. It was so arduous that the initial assault was considered under-equipped for victory, forcing Alexander to search his dominions for ten days for reinforcements. When Alexander returned and finally gained the upper hand after months of fighting, his men spared no one and an estimated 6,000 Tyrians were killed. After the battle, the Macedonians dealt very harshly with the defenders. 2,000 Tyrians were crucified for their involvement in the siege as the majority of the male population were put to death and the women and children enslaved. The king was spared but could only watch on as a triumphant victory procession made its way through the streets.

As a symbol of his great victory and a warning to other rivals, Alexander placed his largest catapult in front of the city's temple of Hercules. One of the few cities to resist Alexander's mighty army, the harsh treatment made the remaining unconquered areas of Asia Minor sit up and take notice. Any city would now think twice before actively resisting Alexander as he pushed towards Egypt and then inland to the decisive battle of Gaugamela.

*After finally breaking through, the Macedonians ransacked the city as punishment for its resolute defence*





### 1. COASTAL DEPLOYMENT

Tyre's walls are out of range of the Macedonian siege weapons. Consequently, Alexander orders the construction of a 61-metre (200-foot) wide mole out of rock and timber to bridge the gap. The king of Tyre, Azemilcus, quickly evacuates women and children to Carthage.

### 2. SIEGE TOWERS

Two 46-metre (150-foot) high wooden towers are built and are protected from fire arrows by raw animal hides. As the towers rumble closer to the walls, the builders perish as arrows and burning hot sand rains down from the ramparts.

### 3. TYRIAN RESPONSE

Using their ingenuity, the defenders fashion a makeshift fire ship out of an old horse transport. The ship is loaded with dry branches and sulphur and launched towards the two towers. It reaches the siege weapons and sets them ablaze.

### 4. REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE

Alexander's fleet is bolstered by regional powers that decide to join the Macedonians. 120 ships arrive from Cyprus and 80 ships defect from the Persians to join Alexander's cause. The new ships help repel Tyrian triremes as the siege begins anew.

### 5. WIDENING THE MOLE

Reinvigorated, Alexander orders an extension of the mole and the construction of two new towers. The towers and siege engines are floated against the walls as many of Tyre's residents shelter inside temples to get out of the line of fire.

### 6. BREACHING THE WALLS

The mole reaches the Tyrian battlements and catapults are assembled to batter the city. Smaller raiding parties attack from the north and south, as Tyre comes under attack from all directions.

### 7. ATTACK FROM SIDON

Both of the main harbours are blockaded by Tyrian triremes. Alexander decides to assault the northern harbour and three galleys are rammed and sunk. The dock is now under Macedonian control as the Tyrians lose half of their naval defences.

### 8. MIND THE ROCKS!

To prevent the Macedonian ships getting too close to the walls, the Tyrians hurl huge boulders into the water. Alexander's ships are forced to lasso the boulders away, but this time-consuming operation leads to a counter-attack from armour-plated Tyrian galleys.

### 9. ASSAULT FROM ALL DIRECTIONS

The Tyrian resources and manpower are beginning to be over stretched. The siege weapons at the front of the mole continue to bombard the front gate while small batteries sail to the rear of the island as the city is encircled.

### 10. MACEDONIAN VICTORY

The Macedonian fleet enters the harbour as the relentless siege continues. The Tyrians are pushed back so far that Alexander is able to land infantry divisions that race into the city and win the six-month siege for their emperor. Tyre is defeated.

## OPPOSING FORCES

### MACEDONIANS

LEADER

ALEXANDER

INFANTRY

30,000

NAVY

200 SHIPS

### TYRIANS

LEADER

KING AZEMILICUS

INFANTRY

15,000

(PLUS 35,000 CIVILIANS)

NAVY

80 SHIPS

**“2,000 TYRIANS WERE CRUCIFIED FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE SIEGE AS THE MAJORITY OF THE MALE POPULATION WERE PUT TO DEATH AND THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN ENSLAVED”**



Images: DK Images, Thinkstock

# KEY UNITS AND WEAPONRY

They may have been outnumbered, but superior tactics and technology ensured the Macedonians were well prepared for battle

**W**hen Alexander took on the Persian Empire, the odds looked impossible. Attacking the ancient world's superpower while outnumbered five to one looked like a suicide mission, but the Persian army was to prove no match for this highly advanced war machine. With tactical nous to guide it, the army proved to be an unstoppable force.

## MACEDONIAN HOPLITES

### SARISSA

Used both defensively and offensively, these wooden, iron-tipped weapons were longer than any other on the battlefield, measuring up to seven metres (23 feet) in length.

### PHALANX

Alexander's hoplites fought in densely packed battle formations called phalanxes. 20 ranks deep, they could stretch for up to a quarter of a mile across. With their shields interlocked, the hoplites advanced across battlefields irresistibly, their exceptionally long spears pressing opponents back while Alexander's cavalry and archers ravaged his enemy's flanks.

### HELMET

Though the elaborate crest across the top was less common, most helmets were made of a sturdy bronze to protect the head and face.

### CUIRASS

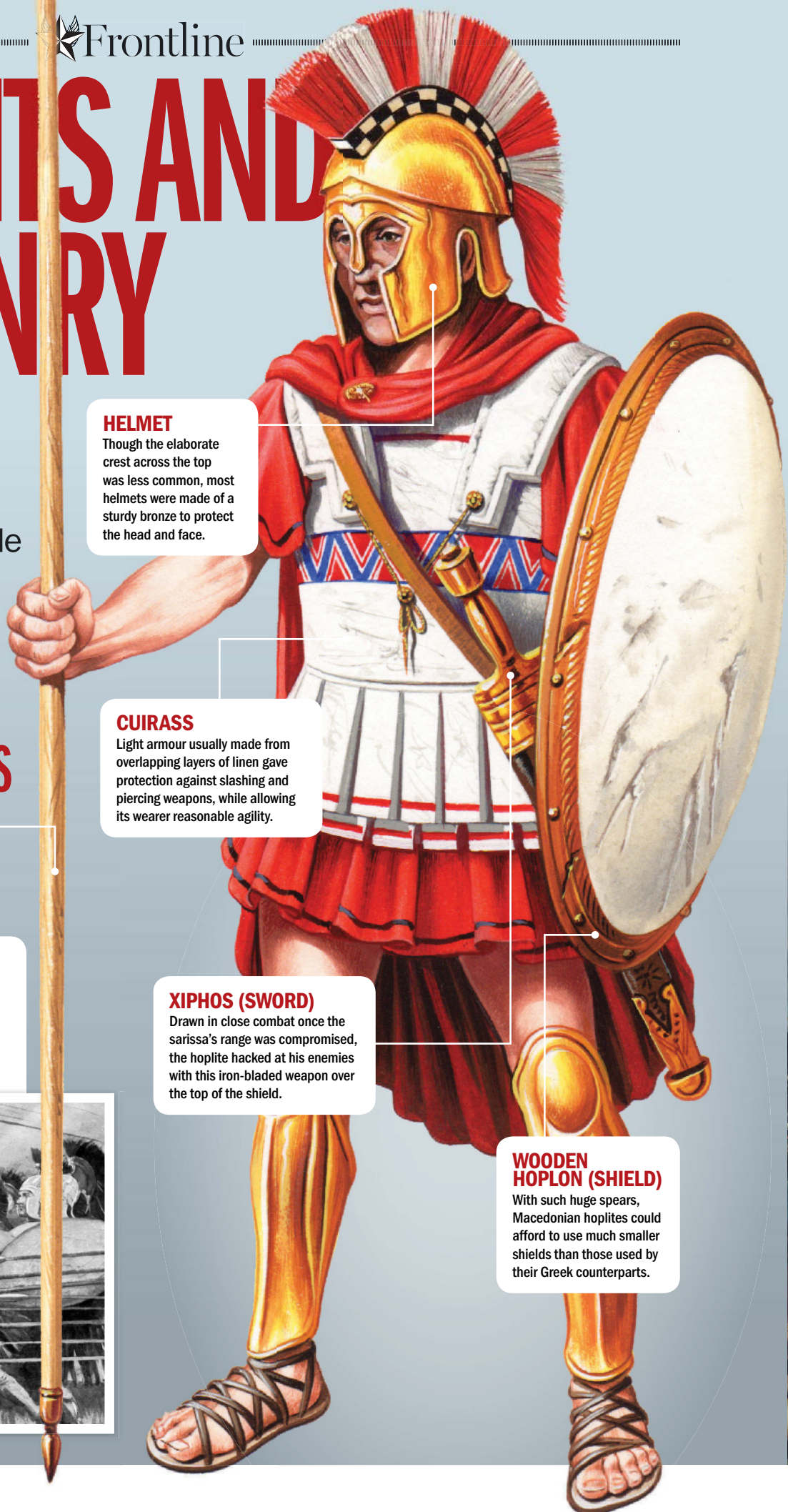
Light armour usually made from overlapping layers of linen gave protection against slashing and piercing weapons, while allowing its wearer reasonable agility.

### XIPHOS (SWORD)

Drawn in close combat once the sarissa's range was compromised, the hoplite hacked at his enemies with this iron-bladed weapon over the top of the shield.

### WOODEN HOPLON (SHIELD)

With such huge spears, Macedonian hoplites could afford to use much smaller shields than those used by their Greek counterparts.





### HYPASPISTS

These lightly armoured troops played a vital role in protecting the phalanx's vulnerable flanks. Armed with shields, short spears and swords, they also followed the cavalry into breaches in the enemy ranks. Only the bravest and fittest were selected to serve. Alexander took 3,000 with him into Persia.

### COMPANION CAVALRY

Alexander took eight squadrons of about 1,800 men into Persia. Attacking in wedge formations with the squadron commander at the front, companion cavalry charged their enemy with double-ended lances that could be reversed if one end broke off. Once in the thick of the mêlée, swords were then drawn to bring opponents down.

# THE PERSIAN ARMY

THE KEY UNITS THAT TRIED TO KEEP ALEXANDER AT BAY

## THE IMMORTALS

This heavy unit was the core of the Persian army. Its name comes from the practice of immediately replacing any fallen member. The force's size was maintained at exactly 10,000. Armed with wicker shields, short spears, and swords, they also wore heavy scale armour, which slowed them in battle.

## SCYTHIAN CAVALRY

Darius had as many as 45,000 cavalymen, many of who were Scythians – a nomadic people from central Asia who were past masters of mounted warfare. Lightly armoured and armed with bows and javelins, they were a highly mobile unit that was used to harass Alexander's lines and raid his camps.

## SCYTHED CHARIOTEERS

Desperate for a way to disrupt Alexander's phalanxes, the Persians armed the wheels of their war chariots with metre-long iron scythes, which could then be driven into the Greek ranks to cause carnage. They were drawn by two to four horses and manned by a driver and up to two warriors.



*The charge of the Persian scythed chariots at the Battle of Gaugamela*



*Right: Persian immortals often wore less armour than other soldiers*

*The Persian force was crushed by Alexander at the Battle of the Granicus*



# HEAD TO HEAD

Alexander and Darius were two of the most powerful rulers of the ancient era, but who had the edge?

**ALEXANDER THE GREAT**  
*YEARS IN POWER: 336-323 BCE*  
*LOYALTY: MACEDONIAN EMPIRE*

## LEADERSHIP

Alexander was renowned for leading from the front and would accompany his men into battle, inspiring them to victory on many occasions. His courageousness meant he received many battle wounds.

## RESPECT

Despite being the undisputed leader of the Macedonians, many of Alexander's generals were assassinated for treason with reasons ranging from genuine usurpation plans to the emperor's own paranoia.

## DIPLOMACY

The emperor's politics were almost solely geared towards his grip on the throne. His right to rule was certain, which added considerably to the infighting after his death in the Wars of the Diadochi.

## MILITARY BACKING

Alexander was fortunate as he inherited a very well trained and disciplined army from his father. He was also a shrewd and brave leader with many talented generals who stood beside him.

## PRESTIGE

The Macedonian Empire had reached its zenith by the time of Alexander's death in 323 BCE. It had grown larger than the Achaemenid Empire and was universally feared.

## TOTAL



## THE MACEDONIAN ARMY UNDER ALEXANDER

Discipline, determination and organisation were the key skills required to be a member of Alexander's army. Its strong core came from intense training and the soldiers thrived off their new leader's charisma and energy. An oath of allegiance meant the phalanx and companion cavalry would fight on and on for Alexander, but it wasn't just a determination to succeed. Macedonian battle tactics were some of the best in the world, and the close-knit phalanx was virtually impregnable against Persian infantry and wielded longer, stronger sarissa spears. This was no part-time army – it was a devoted fighting force.

“Alexander knew the vast army relied on quantity over quality and was not intimidated by the masses of Persian warriors”



# THE PERSIAN ARMY UNDER DARIUS

The cornerstone of the Persian military was the immortals that served as the heavy infantry. They were accompanied by two main types of cavalry: scythe chariots and early examples of cataphract cavalry. Alexander knew the vast army relied on quantity over quality and was not intimidated by the masses of Persian warriors. The tough phalanx would nullify the role of the shock cavalry while the cold steel of the Companion cavalry dealt with the infantry. Darius soon knew he could not compete with Alexander and sent two letters of peace, but both were ignored by the headstrong Macedonian.

“Known as the king of kings, Darius ruled without equal on and off the battlefield”



## DARIUS III

**YEARS IN POWER:** 336-330 BCE  
**LOYALTY:** ACHAEMENID EMPIRE

### LEADERSHIP

..... ☆  
Darius would be in the heat of the battle aboard his chariot but lacked the elite military skills and upbringing of his rival. He would often flee from the battlefield to safety.

### RESPECT

..... ☆  
Known as the king of kings, Darius ruled without equal on and off the battlefield and resistance against him only mounted when his empire was on the brink of destruction.

### DIPLOMACY

..... ☆  
When Darius took the throne, the Achaemenid Empire was beginning to fracture. The king failed to control the satraps, who controlled large portions of his empire, and often ruled selfishly.

### MILITARY BACKING

..... ☆  
A leader who often relied on numbers alone for victory, Darius's greatest mistake came at Gaugamela, where his numerically superior forces were both outfought and outthought by the Macedonian phalanx.

### PRESTIGE

..... ☆  
The Achaemenid Empire was one of the largest empires of the ancient world, but by the time of Darius, it was past its peak and lacked a strong economy or national identity.

### TOTAL



Illustrations: Jean-Michel Girard - The Art Agency

# ALEXANDER THE GREAT

'Companion cavalry' was an idea that Alexander took from his father Phillip, and they became an effective shock force





# THE GODLIKE CULT OF THE CONQUEROR

Dr Edward Bispham discusses the mythological status conjured by the all-conquering emperor

## WAS THERE A CULT OF PERSONALITY SURROUNDING ALEXANDER WITHIN HIS EMPIRE?

Yes, undoubtedly, and one that Alexander encouraged himself among his close circle (the Companions) and more widely in subject populations. At the same time, the development of this cult, or Alexander's willingness to promote or tolerate it, turned some of his own allies against him. Macedonian general Krateros famously said that he was a friend of the king, while others were friends of Alexander, highlighting the difference between those who were loyal to Alexander as heir to the Macedonian throne and those who supported him more for who he was.

## HOW SUCCESSFUL WAS HIS DELEGATION OF POWER THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE?

Alexander broadly adopted the existing power structures of the Persian Empire he overthrew. Yet he was unwilling to trust individuals, and created a culture of distrust by dividing power in regional centres among numerous subordinates. This prevented anyone having a position from which to challenge him but accelerated the dissolution of government after his death.

## DID HE THINK OF HIMSELF AS A 'GODLIKE FIGURE' OR HAS THIS BEEN EXAGGERATED?

This is a hotly debated topic. It's clear that Alexander was happy for others to think of him like this, and even towards the end of his life he received worship from Greek and barbarian cities – but whether he demanded to be worshipped is uncertain. What he himself thought

is impossible to know, but he found it useful, as did those who tried to adopt his mantle, to be thought of as more than human.

## HOW MUCH DID HIS DRINKING PROBLEMS AND BAD TEMPER AFFECT HIS DECISION MAKING?

Historical sources suggest that Alexander was an unbalanced alcoholic, and that he drank himself to death. One does not conquer most of the known world as a functioning alcoholic, however. Alexander grew up in a hard-drinking culture, but was not determined by it. Charges of lack of self-control are a different matter, and like many absolute rulers, Alexander was oversensitive, and doubly so given that he was reinventing Macedonian identity and kingship. His murder of Kleitos, and the executions of Parmenion, Philotas and Kallisthenes, are testimony to his acute sensitivity.

## HOW MUCH DID ALEXANDER OWE HIS SUCCESS TO HIS FATHER? WHAT DID HE INHERIT FROM HIM?

Alexander's achievements would not have been possible without Philip, who made Macedonia a strong kingdom. He inherited a modern and professional army deeply loyal to the king. He also inherited his father's Greek alliance, which allowed him to wage a naval war against Persia, and his father's advisers, whom he rid himself of sooner rather than

later. Even the idea of overthrowing Persia was Philip's. Alexander failed, however, to inherit his father's genius for diplomacy, his patience and his overall groundedness.

## WHY WERE THERE MANY PLOTS TO DISPOSE OF HIM WHEN HE WAS SUCH A SUCCESSFUL LEADER?

Most of the plots against Alexander were probably the product of paranoid fantasy or excuses to remove those he found uncongenial. It is likely that opposition grew in his last years to his perceived orientation towards Persian culture, but whether any of these were aimed at removing him rather than re-balancing his vision of the monarchy is most unlikely.

## WHAT WAS HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS TROOPS? WHAT MADE HIM AN EFFECTIVE COMMANDER?

Alexander was young and dashing. His men loved him not because he was a king but because he was willing to do himself everything he asked of them. His willingness to take risks resulted in the considerable number of injuries he sustained in campaigns, often on the front line; indeed his own men followed him to what, for them, were the ends of the Earth. His tactical genius was considerable, but it was above all his ability to use cavalry, even against much larger forces, to punch

a hole in the enemy line or flank, destabilising their formation as the infantry was brought to bear, that made him great. Both cavalry and infantry were heavily armed – the latter with the 5.5-metre (18-foot) long sarissa – and strongly disciplined: both developments that can be credited to Philip.

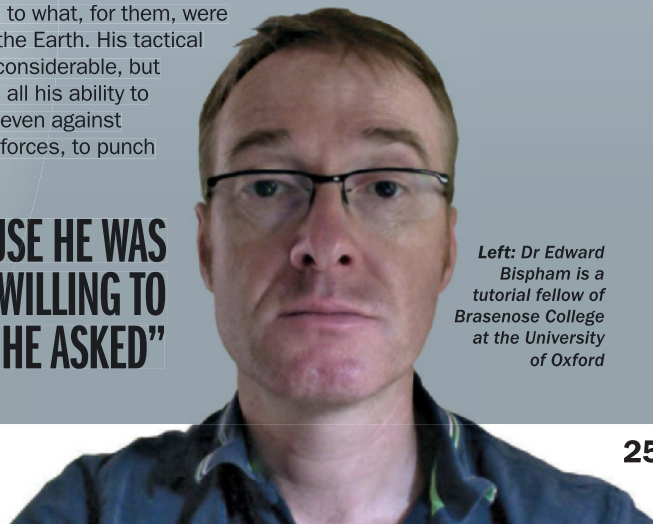
## WAS HE A POLITICAL LEADER AS WELL AS A MILITARY LEADER?

This is probably the unsung aspect of Alexander. He seems to have understood that his Greco-Macedonian elite could never hold his vast conquests by force, and that he had to appeal to his Asiatic subjects as a king they could identify with. The tragedy was that almost none of his Companions were willing to sacrifice the externals of power for a guarantee of long-term stability. He was a long way ahead of his time.

## WAS IT HIS PERSONALITY THAT WAS HOLDING THE KINGDOM TOGETHER?

Undoubtedly. When he died, the speed of the descent into civil war and the rivalry of his generals is eloquent of how essential Alexander was to the kingdom he built.

**“HIS MEN LOVED HIM NOT BECAUSE HE WAS A KING, BUT BECAUSE HE WAS WILLING TO DO HIMSELF EVERYTHING HE ASKED”**



Left: Dr Edward Bispham is a tutorial fellow of Brasenose College at the University of Oxford

# The Red Baron

WORDS NICK SOLDINGER

Hunter, cold-eyed killer and World War I superstar – one man owned the airspace above the Western Front

“BROUGHT UP TO SEE KILLING AS A COMPETITIVE SPORT, HE SPENT EVERY SPARE HOUR STALKING WILD ANIMALS ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS OF HIS FAMILY’S SIZEABLE SILESIAIAN ESTATE”

**2** 1 April 1918 was a Sunday. At about 11am, Lieutenant Wilfrid May of the newly formed RAF found himself high above the shattered battlefields of the Somme. He was a long way from home. The 22-year-old from rural Canada would ordinarily be emerging from a stuffy church service at this time of the week, but here he was searching the blue skies of northern France for men to kill.

It was only May's second combat patrol. His first, the day before, had left his commanding officer (CO) Captain Roy Brown, who'd known May since high school, convinced that the inexperienced pilot wouldn't last long. If the patrol got into a fight that morning, Brown strictly told May, he was to keep out of it. At the age of 25, Brown was a veteran well versed in the dangers of aerial combat.

He also knew May's mother quite well, and had no desire to send her a letter of condolence.

Soon after entering German airspace, the RAF patrol was attacked by the brilliantly painted planes of The Red Baron's Flying Circus.

Initially, May obeyed orders, obediently circling high above the battle, until he glimpsed a solitary German triplane below, also apparently avoiding the fray. It was an easy target and the opportunity for glory too great to resist. As he pushed his joystick forward and dived towards destiny, May didn't know that he was about to attack Wolfram von Richthofen, the cousin of the deadliest airman of his age – Manfred von Richthofen – who would soon be right on his tail.

Manfred von Richthofen was bred for war. Born into an aristocratic military family in Kleiburg, eastern Germany, on 2 May 1892, he was taught to hunt from an early age. Before he was out of his teens he'd become a gifted marksman and skilled hunter. Brought up to see killing as a competitive sport, Manfred spent every spare hour stalking wild animals across the mountains and forests of his family's sizeable Silesian estate. Hunting would remain a life-long obsession.

Aged 11, Richthofen's father sent him away to Wahlstatt Cadet College. Here, his formal military training began, carving a narrow educational route into adulthood.

Through endless drill, classroom instruction and corporal punishment, the self-sacrifice required of a warrior-servant to the Kaiser was hammered into him.

Eight years later, when Richthofen emerged from the Royal Military Academy at Lichterfelde, he'd evolved from a boy hunter into a heel-clicking cavalry officer steeped in German militarism. His martial skill, self-discipline, extreme sense of duty and total self-belief added up make to an individual perfectly programmed for war.

However, when war broke out in 1914, the 22-year-old discovered that his role was all but redundant. The advent of the machine gun had rendered mounted troops obsolete, and so the young soldier – aching for glory – began looking for other ways into the war. He soon found one via the intriguing new flying machines buzzing about above the freshly dug trenches.

In 1914, planes were only a decade old. Military commanders on both sides had serious doubts they could be put to any practical use, but as trench warfare mired the conflict into a stalemate, it was clear they could be used to spy on enemy lines from above. Traditionally,



## THE RED BARON

reconnaissance had been a cavalry role, and in May 1915, Richthofen got himself reassigned as observer with the German Flying Service on the Eastern front.

By now, aerial warfare was changing rapidly. In a few months it had gone from men in rickety contraptions attacking each other with bricks and pistols to purpose-built flying gun platforms. The Germans had led the way, and by July 1915 were ruling the skies with their Fokker Eindecker monoplanes. Effectively the world's first fighter aircraft, it came replete with a synchronised firing mechanism that enabled the pilot to shoot through his propeller without shooting it off. Competing with each other to "score the most kills," German pilots who managed a tally of five or more also acquired a flashy new sobriquet – überkanonen, or top gun.

These aces, as they were known on the Allied side of the line, were Imperial Germany's posterboys. Their stories appeared in newspapers and their faces on cigarette cards all over the country. Girls wanted to marry them, boys wanted to be them. None was more famous than Oswald Boelcke, and it was Boelcke who, during a chance meeting with a besotted Richthofen on a train in 1915, convinced him that his future lay in flying fighters.

Richthofen requested permission to retrain as a pilot. Not a naturally gifted pilot, he struggled through flight school. Despite crashing on his first solo flight, by Christmas 1915 he'd won his wings. Rather than being assigned to a fighter squadron, however, Richthofen found himself flying bombers (another recent development) until Boelcke once again stepped in.

In August 1916, Boelcke was scouring German airbases on the Eastern Front for pilots to join his newly formed fighter squadron the



The Red Baron's squadron Jagdstaffel 11. Manfred sits in his Albatross bi-plane, while his brother Lothar sits on the ground

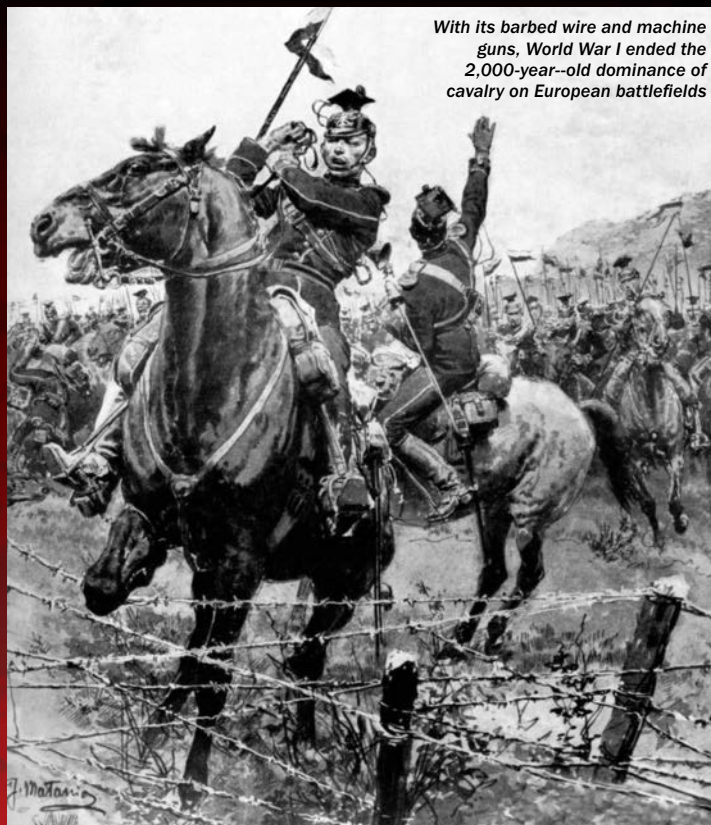
# Cavalry recon of World War I

## RICHTHOFEN'S WAR STARTED NOT IN THE AIR BUT ON HORSEBACK

After completing military training, Richthofen was commissioned into the 1st Regiment of Uhlans – lancers who specialised in reconnaissance. It was a good fit for the dashing young baron. For hundreds of years the cavalry had enjoyed high status in European armies, and he was almost as keen a horseman as he was a hunter.

When World War I broke out, Richthofen was garrisoned in Ostrowo, eastern Germany, and a few days into the conflict led a reconnaissance patrol into enemy territory. He spent several days behind Russian lines and, after narrowly avoiding a confrontation with mounted Cossacks, withdrew. On his return, he discovered that his garrison commander had been wrongly informed of his fate. Richthofen was forced to send a telegram home reassuring his parents that he wasn't dead.

The next day, he was dispatched to the Western Front. Here, on 21 August, his troop charged a French position near Virton in Belgium, only to be cut down by machine guns. The incident proved what Richthofen had suspected for some time – that cavalry was redundant on the modern battlefield. Soon after he found himself undertaking supply duties far from the Front. It was a role he endured for several months until he wrote a letter to his commanding officer requesting reassignment to the Flying Service. "My dear excellency!" his letter opened, "I have not gone to war to collect cheese and eggs..." He was transferred almost immediately.



With its barbed wire and machine guns, World War I ended the 2,000-year-old dominance of cavalry on European battlefields

# Rise of the Jastas and the Flying Circus

WITH THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE PLANE AS A WEAPON CAME THE NEED FOR NEW AND INNOVATIVE TACTICS

At the outbreak of World War I, Germany's air force was all but nonexistent. Over time, however, events on the ground and technological advances in the air helped shape both its structure and role.

With a war on two fronts, Germany fought defensively, particularly in the west, for most of the conflict. When it came to air supremacy, therefore, the emphasis focused on developing fighter planes whose job it was to stay behind their own lines, protecting German airspace from incursion by enemy bombers and reconnaissance aircraft. This gave the nascent German Flying Service an edge for great chunks of the war in two ways. First, their aircraft flew fewer miles so could stay airborne for longer. Second, their job – like the RAF's in 1940 – was to defend the air and not attack the ground, so their aircraft tended to be lighter and faster.

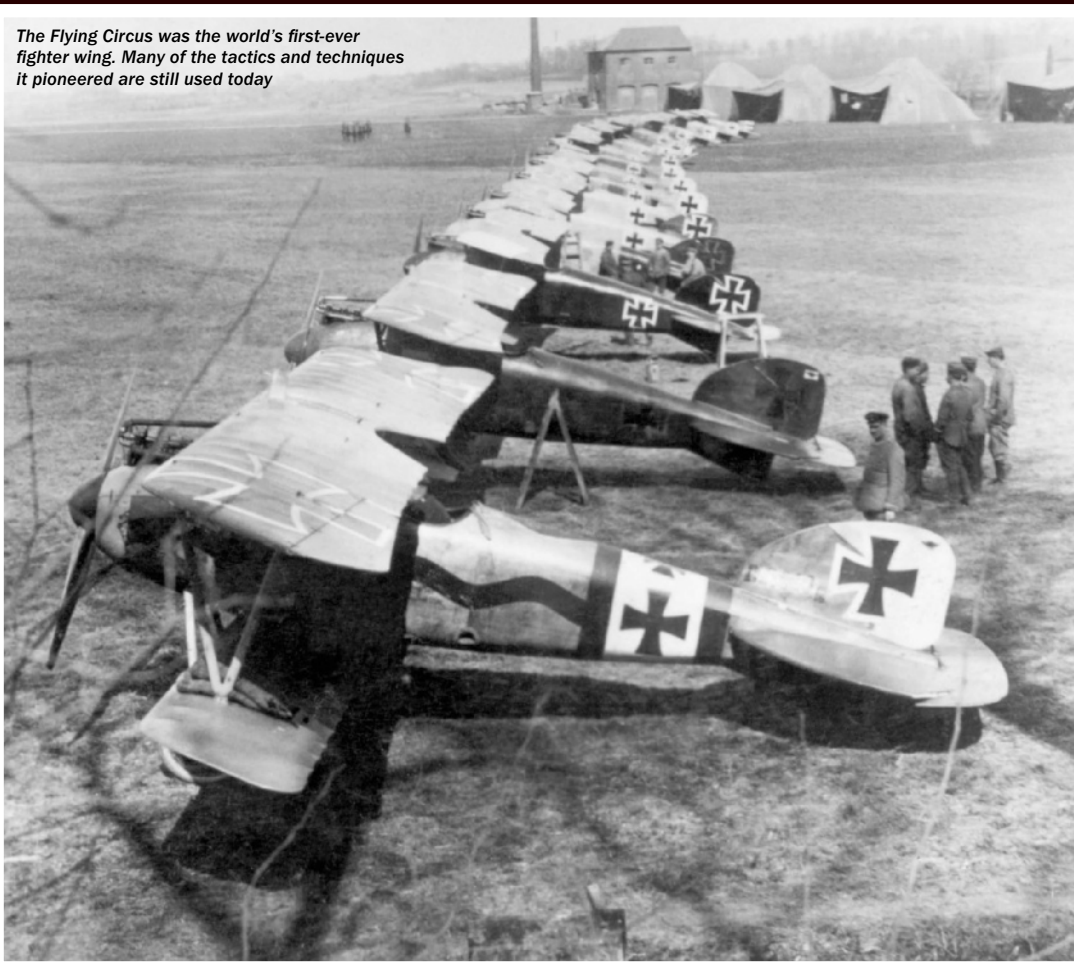
With a clear role defined by 1915, different German aircraft began to appear that could carry out this task – initially in the shape of the Fokker Eindecker, then the various iterations of the Albatross biplane, and finally the flawed Fokker Dr1. Theories about how these new flying weapons might best be used also evolved.

By the summer of 1916, Germany's leading ace Oswald Boelcke organised a prototype squadron of aerial hunters. Jagdstaffel 2 – or Jasta 2 – which started life as a mongrel group of flyers in a mixed bag of planes. Under Boelcke's guidance, however, and once equipped with Albatrosses, Jasta 2 became a prototype for success. Typically manned by 12-16 pilots, a Jasta – or squadron – would hunt in formation, and by April 1917, with 37 fully operational Jastas on the Western Front, the Germans had established total, albeit temporary, control of their own airspace.

This initial success bore Jagdgeschwader 1 – a four-squadron formation created in the summer of 1917. Nicknamed the Flying Circus, it established itself as the most-feared air unit of World War I and set a precedent for future terror. Richthofen was its first Great War leader, while Hermann Goering – who'd go onto lead the Nazi Luftwaffe in the next war – was its last.

**“IT ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS THE MOST-FEARED AIR UNIT OF WORLD WAR I”**

*The Flying Circus was the world's first-ever fighter wing. Many of the tactics and techniques it pioneered are still used today*



## Early aces

### MAX IMMELMANN

The first German ace of the war was South African-born Immelman, who won the Pour Le Merite – at the time Germany's highest decoration. He claimed 17 victories before being killed in June 1916. He's best remembered for inventing the Immelman Turn – a loop-and-roll dogfight manoeuvre still used today.



**RICHTHOFEN WASN'T GERMANY'S FIRST TOP GUN, OR ITS LAST**

### OSWALD BOELCKE

Pour Le Merite-winner Boelcke claimed 40 kills before losing his life in a mid-air collision in October 1916. He left behind a legacy of tactics and techniques that are still taught to modern fighter pilots. Boelcke's death had a particularly profound affect on Richthofen, who idolised him.



### HERMANN GOERING

Hitler's future right-hand man was appointed the Flying Circus's CO after Richthofen's death. He ended the war with 22 kills and a Pour Le Merite. During his time with the outfit, he befriended Richthofen's cousin, Wolfram. The pair would go on to work closely together after the war.



# The tactics of fight & flight

RICHTHOFEN WAS A GREAT HUNTER IN THE SKY, BUT HE UTILISED TWO KEY PRINCIPLES TO GAIN THE EDGE ON HIS OPPONENTS



## MANOEUVRE

Max Immelmann was Germany's first great pioneering fighter pilot. As well as becoming the country's first top gun, he also bequeathed later pilots, like Richthofen, his famous Immelmann Turn. This manoeuvre cleverly repositioned a

fighter aircraft after an initial attack. After making a high-speed dive from height, German pilots would then pull back on their stick, climb vertically until their engine was on the verge of a stall, then loop round into another dive. At the top of the loop they'd then roll their aircraft so it was the right way up as it began its next attacking dive.

## FORMATION

In the popular imagination, the Red Baron was an acrobatic flyer and reckless daredevil, but in reality he was neither. A pilot of limited ability, he was risk averse, and with the exception of his final flight, someone who remained extraordinarily calm in combat. For the most part, he employed a simple strategy invented by his mentor Oswald Boelcke. Flying at the point of an arrow formation, Richthofen would attack from height with the Sun behind him. This gave him height, speed and visual advantage over his enemy, while his squadron, gathered around him, protected his flanks and rear.

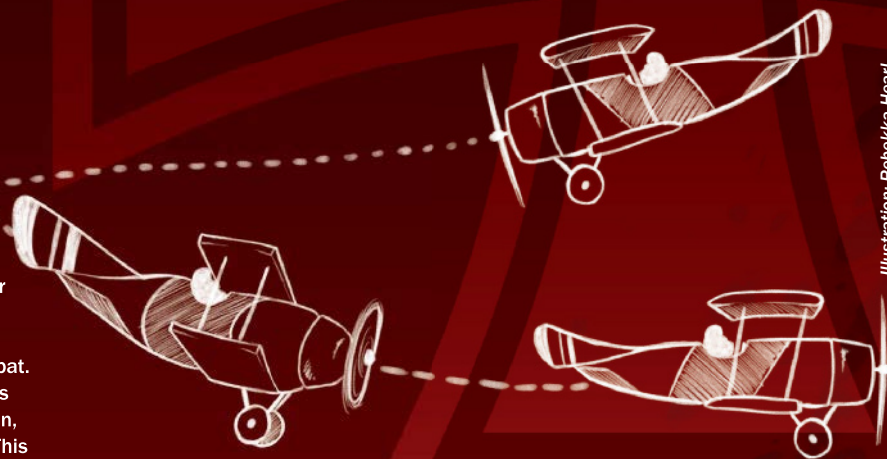


Illustration: Rebeckka Hearl

## The other Richthofens

MANFRED MAY BE THE MOST CELEBRATED RICHTHOFEN, BUT HIS RELATIVES ALSO MADE FAMOUS - AND INFAMOUS - CONTRIBUTIONS TO HISTORY



Above: Wolfram pioneered many techniques while he was with the Condor Legion

### WOLFRAM FREIHERR VON RICHTHOFEN

Like his more-famous cousin Manfred von Richthofen, Wolfram started the war in a cavalry unit. After seeing action on both the Western and Eastern Front, and earning an Iron Cross for bravery, he found himself practically redundant by 1915.

In 1917, he followed Manfred and Lothar into the Flying Service and by 1918 was a trained fighter pilot. Assigned to the Red Baron's Flying Circus, he was lucky not to be killed on his first combat patrol, during which his cousin was killed. He survived the war and achieved top-gun status with eight confirmed kills.

Wolfram left the services after the war and studied for a doctorate in aeronautical engineering, qualifying in 1929. His doctoral thesis was a top-secret study on production techniques for building all-metal aircraft.

A keen admirer of Hitler, Wolfram was appointed chief of aircraft production for the Luftwaffe when the Nazis came to power in 1933. He then commanded the Condor Legion during the Spanish Civil War - overseeing its infamous bombing of Guernica - and became a field marshal of the Luftwaffe. Serving at the highest level throughout World War II, he was captured by American troops in 1945, dying shortly afterwards of natural causes.



Above: English ace Albert Ball crashed after shooting Lothar down in a dogfight. For propaganda purposes, Lothar was awarded the kill

### LOTHAR VON RICHTHOFEN

The past will always remember Lothar von Richthofen as the Red Baron's kid brother, but in many ways he more closely resembled the swaggering daredevil that his older sibling's legend represents. Although he had a similar upbringing to Manfred, he couldn't have been more different. Standing at well over six feet tall, he not only towered over his considerably smaller brother, but had a bigger personality to match.

Manfred was often described as detached, humourless and aloof - particularly as the war progressed - a man who seemed to live a celibate, almost monk-like existence. In contrast, Lothar was a fun-loving extrovert who proved to be far more impulsive in the air.

Although Manfred scored more kills, Lothar - who had considerably less air time due partly to long periods of convalescence - notched them up quicker. By the end of the war, he'd earned 40 kills despite having only been an active fighter pilot for about eight months. Brought down four times, he spent more time in the hospital than he did in the air. He survived the war but was killed in a flying accident in 1922, aged 27.

**"BY THE END OF THE WAR, HE'D EARNED 40 KILLS DESPITE HAVING ONLY BEEN AN ACTIVE FIGHTER PILOT FOR ABOUT EIGHT MONTHS"**

Jagdstaffel – literally ‘hunting flight’. Only the best were selected, and by the time Boelcke returned to France, 23-year-old Manfred von Richthofen was sitting next to him.

As a young hunter in the wilds of Silesia, Richthofen had been encouraged to collect trophies of his kills. In his bedroom as a boy, stuffed heads of the animals he’d shot stared lifelessly down at him from every wall as he slept or played. It was a macabre practice that he carried over into his adult life – a life from here on in that would involve hunting humans.

In September 1916, while on his maiden mission with Boelcke, Richthofen claimed his first confirmed kill. After shooting down a British plane, he landed next to its wreckage and sliced the serial number from the skin of its fuselage with a hunting knife. Then, back at base, he ordered a silver cup from a jewellers as a trophy. It was a ritual he continued throughout the war – a cup for each plane and, whenever possible, a strip of canvas hacked from his dead prey’s plane. The latter decorated the walls of his quarters – a gruesome patchwork reminder of the dozens that he’d killed.

Although not a great flyer, Richthofen was a predator par excellence, while the plane he

## “AFTER SHOOTING DOWN A BRITISH PLANE, HE LANDED NEXT TO ITS WRECKAGE AND SLICED THE SERIAL NUMBER FROM THE SKIN OF ITS FUSELAGE WITH A HUNTING KNIFE”

did most of his killing from was, for a while at least, technologically superior to anything else in the skies. By late 1916, the Fokker Eindecker was being replaced by the Albatross biplane. Its 170-horsepower engine gave it enough power to carry not one but two synchronised machine guns, while its rigid fuselage meant its aerodynamics (a newly coined word) offered a unique edge in the aerial duels that the flyers were now calling dogfights.

Richthofen’s other great advantage was Boelcke’s brain. Known as the father of fighter tactics, Boelcke had developed a set of principles for surviving dogfights known as Boelcke’s Dicta, which included such gems as “attack from height” and “use the cover of the clouds and the glare of the Sun.” He also warned his flyers that “foolish acts of bravery” would get them killed.

Something Boelcke couldn’t legislate for, however, was aerial accidents, and on 28

October 1916, he was killed in a mid-air collision during a chaotic dogfight over Northern France with British pilots.

A month after Boelcke’s funeral, Richthofen claimed his 11th kill – it was one that was to change his life. The shooting down of Britain’s leading ace Major Lanoe Hawker VC in November 1916 elevated Richthofen to superstar status. With Boelcke gone, Imperial Germany’s PR machine needed a new hero to dazzle its war-weary masses, and the young Prussian aristocrat got the job.

In January 1917, Richthofen claimed his 16th confirmed kill and became Germany’s highest-scoring ace. Awarded the coveted Pour Le Mérite – a year to the day since Boelcke had received his – he was also given command of his own squadron – Jagdstaffel 11. He’d been a fighter pilot for less than six months.

Giddy with success, he now intended to lead his new squadron much as Boelcke had done,

*Richthofen's brightly coloured plane stood out in the skies*



**“WHEN THE MIST LIFTED AT ABOUT 10.30AM, THE RED BARON LED HIS FLYING CIRCUS INTO THE SKIES. WITHIN HALF AN HOUR, ITS PILOTS WERE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES AGAINST A FLIGHT OF SOPWITH CAMELS OVER THE SOMME VALLEY”**





*Australian troops pose with the wreckage of Richthofen's triplane shortly after it was shot down on 21 April 1918*



but with one crucial difference. "One fine day," he wrote, "I came upon the idea of having my crate painted glaring red. The result was that absolutely everyone could not help but notice my red bird."

It was an audacious gesture, and Richthofen's men were rightfully concerned that his distinctive aircraft would make him a target. They suggested painting all of their squadron's Albatrosses red, but Richthofen refused. They could customise their planes' liveries, he told them, but his plane alone would stalk the skies painted the colour of blood.

By April 1917, the skies were filled with Germany's new Albatross biplanes, and that month saw the British Royal Flying Corps suffer greater losses than in any other of the war. In four violent weeks, known as Bloody April, it lost 275 aircraft, a third of its entire force. Richthofen alone accounted for 21, taking his personal tally to 52, 12 past Boelcke.

The Red Baron, as the international press would soon call him, was ordered to go on leave. He spent his 25th birthday lunching with the kaiser and much of the rest of his time dictating his memoirs. The resulting book *The Red Battle Flyer* was so heavily edited by the authorities that Richthofen later distanced himself from it. His adoring public, however, swallowed every propagandised word and it became an instant best-seller.

In June 1917, Richthofen returned to the front as commander of Jagdgeschwader 1 – a new four-squadron fighter group. This new highly mobile force was allotted its own trains to transport it to different sectors of the front. Because it moved about on rails – as circuses of the day commonly did – it was dubbed the



The Red Baron met his end while being chased by Captain Arthur Brown in a Sopwith Camel

Flying Circus by the press, who by now were also portraying Richthofen and his men as chivalrous airborne knights who engaged their enemy in aerial jousts.

This was, of course, romantic tosh. In reality, this new air war was mortal combat fought three miles above the ground in experimental machines. It wasn't chivalry that ensured survival, but stealth. The winner was the man who successfully sneaked up on his rival and put a bullet in his back. It was deadly work and it soon took its toll on Richthofen.

While on leave, the Baron had been shaken by the news that his younger brother Lothar,

also a pilot, had been seriously wounded.

Four months later it was Richthofen's turn to experience that fear. In July 1917, he was hit in the head during a routine dogfight. Temporarily blinded, he managed to land safely, but his injuries left him a psychological mess.

A living Red Baron, Germany's high command had long-since realised, was a powerful propaganda tool. They insisted he stay on the ground, but Richthofen's indoctrination would never allow him to just safely sit out a conflict. Not that he had any appetite left for action. "I'm in wretched spirits after every aerial combat," he wrote in his diary. "When I [land] again at the airfield I go directly to my room. I do not want to hear anyone or see anything. I believe that war is not how people at home imagine it... It is very grim."

Probably suffering from what today is called shell shock, Richthofen also had to cope with a shift of power in the skies. The British and

**"THE WINNER WAS THE MAN WHO SUCCESSFULLY SNEAKED UP ON HIS RIVAL AND PUT A BULLET IN HIS BACK. IT WAS DEADLY WORK AND IT SOON TOOK ITS TOLL ON RICHTHOFEN"**

## The Baron's rivals

MANY ALLIED AIRMAN HUNTED THE SKIES FOR RICHTHOFEN IN THE HOPE OF ENDING HIS REIGN OF TERROR

### MAJOR LANOE HAWKER VC BRITISH

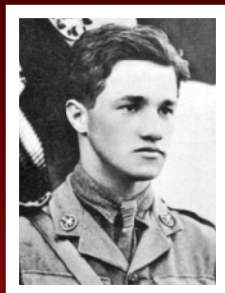
Hawker was the first Briton to achieve 'ace' status. He had seven credited victories when he encountered Richthofen on 23 November 1916. After a lengthy dogfight during which



Richthofen fired 900 rounds, Hawker, running low on fuel, made a break for his own lines. Richthofen followed, and after having to hit his jammed guns with a hammer to get them working again, fired one last burst at Hawker, blowing a hole in the back of his head.

### CAPTAIN ALBERT BALL VC BRITISH

With 44 confirmed and 25 unconfirmed kills, Ball was, when he died, Britain's leading ace. Often hunting the skies as a 'lone wolf', he frequently took on multiple enemies at a time. On 7 May



1917, his flight jumped several planes of the Flying Circus. The Red Baron wasn't there that day, but his brother Lothar was, and Ball shot the younger Richthofen down before being killed himself. The Red Baron described him as "by far the best English flying man."

### CAPTAIN ROY BROWN DSC CANADIAN

Brown is largely credited with finally bringing the Red Baron down, although it's more likely the German ace was killed by ground fire. The Canadian was an experienced leader who claimed



ten confirmed kills – Richthofen being the last. Equally impressive was the fact that in just over a year of leading men in aerial combat, he didn't lose a single pilot. Despite being badly injured in a crash in July 1918, he survived the war.

French had been developing new aircraft to compete with the Albatross, and in the Sopwith Camel bi-plane had found one to match it. Germany's response was the Fokker Dr1 Triplane. Although faster and more agile than the Albatross, it was, however, fatally flawed. Poor visibility, handling difficulties and excess drag all made it a good plane to get killed in. By the end of 1917, the highly skilled Richthofen was the sole surviving member of the squadron Boelcke had raised the previous summer.

With his friends gone and afflicted by daily headaches due to his wounds, Richthofen responded in the only way he knew how. He retreated ever further into himself, and pushed himself ever harder. By 20 April 1918, he claimed his 80th scalp. However, it was to be the Red Baron's last.

The following day was a Sunday. Fog delayed takeoff, and as Richthofen waited to go up, he approached his newest recruit – his 22-year-old cousin Wolfram von Richthofen, who'd never flown in combat before. In the event of enemy contact today, he told him, he was to stay out of it. Observe, learn, by all means, but most importantly, survive.

When the mist lifted at about 10.30am, the Red Baron led his Flying Circus into the skies. Within half an hour, its pilots were fighting for their lives against a flight of Sopwith Camels over the Somme Valley. Wolfram watched the fray from a safe distance, little suspecting that there might be another rookie pilot in the air that day with similar orders. Orders that he'd choose to disobey.

On seeing May's Sopwith hurtling towards Wolfram's helpless triplane, Richthofen yanked his own plane around and set his sights on the man who was trying to kill his cousin. When

May's guns jammed in the dive, however, the young Canadian's courage evaporated and he turned and fled – with an outraged Richthofen giving furious chase.

"The first thing I knew I was being fired on from the rear," May recalled afterwards. "I noticed it was a red triplane but if I'd realised it was Richthofen I'd have passed out on the spot. I kept dodging and spinning from about 12,000 feet until I ran out of sky... Richthofen was firing at me the whole time."

As Richthofen pursued May, he broke every rule in Boelcke's Dicta. Lured out from his own lines at low level into an Australian-controlled sector, his plane attracted overwhelming ground fire. Worse still, the great hunter was now being hunted. On seeing what was unfolding, May's CO Captain Brown had dived to his rescue. Closing in behind Richthofen, he opened fire, just as bullets from the trenches also ripped through the Red Baron's plane.

Moments later, Richthofen was dead, hitting the ground with a bounce and a skid. Australian infantrymen rushed to examine the wrecked aircraft. Inside they found a small, young pilot still clinging to its controls who had been killed by a single bullet to the heart.

Nobody can be sure who it was that killed Manfred von Richthofen. What is certain, though, is that his death ensured his immortality. If the futility of the slaughter in the trenches represented all that was bad about humanity, his intoxicating story embodied something better. With its high-altitude heroics, brightly painted planes and imagined chivalry, it offered something more hopeful.

Perhaps uniquely, his passing was commemorated by both sides. In Germany, the nation mourned, while the British buried him with full military honours marking his grave with a wreath that read: "Our gallant and worthy foe." Richthofen the man may have been dead, but his legend would chime on through history.

**Below: The British buried Richthofen with full military honours. In 1925, his body was disinterred and reburied in Berlin**



Images: Alamy; Chris Collingwood; CG Textures; Corbis; Rex Features

WAR IN NUMBERS

# The Red Baron

80 ◀ THE NUMBER OF PLANES HE SHOT DOWN

THE NUMBER OF PLANES HE SHOT DOWN IN A BI-PLANE ▶

59

123

79 ▲ THE NUMBER OF MEN HE SHOT DOWN

▶ THE NUMBER OF MEN HE KILLED

4 THE NUMBER OF TIMES HE KILLED MORE THAN ONE MAN IN A SINGLE DAY ▶

▶ THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF KILLS HE GOT IN A SINGLE DAY

24

▶ THE NUMBER OF HOURS FLIGHT TRAINING GOING SOLO - AND CRASHING!





Only Alfred and  
Wessex stood  
between complete  
Viking rule of Britain

# Alfred the Great's Viking Wars

WORDS EDOARDO ALBERT

By 867, Wessex was the only kingdom left standing against a seemingly unstoppable Viking force... and defeat meant life or death for Anglo-Saxon Britain

In January 878, a band of men made their way through the Wessex countryside. Viking patrols searched for them, but the fugitives knew the hidden tracks and paths: this was their country. The man on the run was Alfred, and he was last king of the Anglo-Saxons.

The Viking age had begun in 793 with the sacking of the monastery at Lindisfarne, but by the second half of the ninth century, raiders were becoming conquerors. The Great Heathen Army landed in East Anglia in 865 and, led by the three sons of the legendary Ragnar Lothbrok, it had set about its task. Northumbria fell in 866 and East Anglia in 869; Mercia had been neutered as a fighting force in 867. In less than five years, three of the four Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had fallen – only Wessex remained.

The Vikings were masters of intelligence gathering. Their traders penetrated deep into Early Medieval societies, bringing back reports of the shifting political allegiances of the kingdoms of Europe. By 870, the leaders of the Great Army were well acquainted with the fact that Wessex was led by a young, untried king, Æthelred, who had only a younger and even less tried brother to succeed him.

Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were held together by oaths and personal obligations – kill the king, and the Vikings could reset these obligations in their own favour, either by installing a puppet or taking direct rule. For the magnates of Wessex, having witnessed the fates of the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, it must have seemed as if the Viking tide was inexorable. The wiliest among them may have already been sending out feelers to the Great Army, inquiring as to the reward attendant upon a change of allegiance.

But first the leaders of the Great Army expedition, Halfdan and Bagsecg, had to show that they were serious – just how serious they were was demonstrated when they launched their attack in December 870. Winter was when men huddled by their fires; it was no time for war. But with the Wessex fyrd – the levy of free men and royal retainers that made up the kingdom's army – having returned to their fields, winter allowed the Great Army complete freedom of action.

The Vikings made the most of it, sailing up the Thames to the royal estate at Reading. This estate held the food renders due to the king, thus providing ample stores for the Viking force. As was their normal practice, the Danes set about fortifying their base, constructing a rampart to defend the tongue of land they'd occupied at the confluence of the rivers Thames and Kennet, while having their boats dragged upon the strand ready to retreat, should that prove necessary.

## Wessex strikes

Given everything they'd learned in previous campaigns – when the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms took weeks to assemble their forces – Halfdan and Bagsecg could be forgiven for thinking they had time to finish digging in. The logistics of war were such that, even with the royal supplies, the Great Army needed to send out foraging parties. So three days after setting camp at Reading, Halfdan dispatched two Viking earls to plunder the surrounding countryside. But the men of Wessex were moving fast. The ealdorman of Berkshire had gathered his fyrd and, catching the foraging party in open countryside, he

**“Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were held together by oaths and personal obligations – kill the king, and the Vikings could reset these obligations in their own favour”**

attacked. In the heaving, hacking scrum of the shieldwall, one of the Viking earls fell and, for the first time, the invaders broke and fled. The Battle of Englefield was won.

Although not much more than a skirmish, the Battle of Englefield was the first victory over the Great Army. Seeking to make the most of this, King Æthelred, with his brother Alfred, launched an attack on the Viking base at Reading.

This assault failed, and the royal brothers only just escaped with their lives. Now it was Halfdan's turn to follow up his victory so, four days later, he marched his army from its base at Reading, heading west towards the royal estate at Wallingford. This was a resource that Æthelred and Alfred could not lightly give up. Approaching the Berkshire Downs, the Great Army split into two wings, one led by Halfdan and Bagsecg, the other by Viking earls, deploying along a ridge top in this landscape of long rises.

In response, the West Saxons also split their army in two, one wing commanded by Æthelred and the other by Alfred. The royal brothers were both devout and began the morning by hearing Mass. According to some sources, Æthelred remained afterwards to pray while Alfred left and, upon seeing he had to either attack or

withdraw, charged 'like a wild boar' up the hill. This supposedly won Alfred a great victory.

If that seems unlikely, it's because it is. What is likely to have happened is that the sources, all sponsored by Alfred, played down Æthelred's part in the Battle of Ashdown. A more likely explanation of the battle is that the brothers deliberately planned for Alfred to engage both wings of the Great Army and then, when the shieldwalls were engaged and unable to manoeuvre, Æthelred would attack, catching the Viking army in its flank. It was a risky tactic, for it required Alfred and his men to withstand the Viking vice long enough to engage them completely before Æthelred could attack, and yet it worked.

The Great Army lost Bagsecg, five earls and many men, but the West Saxon losses were significant as well. Just two weeks later, the sides fought again, at Basing, but this time Æthelred and Alfred had to withdraw. The year of battles had seen five within a month, in the coldest part of the year. Through the rest of the winter, the war turned into a battle of logistical attrition, with the Vikings sending out foraging parties and Æthelred and Alfred leading patrols over the Downs to ambush them.

With spring, the fighting resumed in earnest. The other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had cracked under Viking pressure, but Wessex was proving tougher. To cover the losses of the Battle of

Ashdown, Halfdan called in reinforcements and by spring, they were in place, and the armies met at Meretun (the location of which has not been determined), with the Great Army the 'masters of the field'. Halfdan was not able to kill Æthelred or Alfred, and the last few months had proved that so long as the West Saxons had leaders, they would fight. However, the Saxons were fast running out of leaders as, in April 871, King Æthelred died. Alfred, the fifth of five brothers, was now king at the age of 21.

The Vikings gathered further men when a 'great summer army' arrived and, with a young king on the throne, they made a further thrust into the heart of Wessex, meeting Alfred in battle at Wilton. Again, Alfred lost, but again the Vikings could not kill or capture him. For the Great Army, it was time to rethink the strategy. Alfred, for his part, desperately needed a chance to regroup and rest. So, representatives of the two sides met and thrashed out terms. Alfred, quite literally, bought himself time. In the autumn of the year of battles, the Great Army withdrew to London. The year had seen nine general engagements (not all recorded), the death of two kings, as well as many thegns and earls, but Wessex, and Alfred, still stood.

### Alfred consolidates

The king had bought himself some time but, so far as the records indicate, he spent it

*Below: Alfred the Great is considered by some to be the first king of England*



# King Alfred the moderniser

HOW ALFRED REORGANISED THE ARMY, FOUNDED THE NAVY AND REBUILT THE COUNTRY

## ✠ A NEW ARMY

The success of the Vikings was down to two key strategic advantages: mobility and surprise. If they encountered a substantial enemy force, the Northmen preferred to retire behind their defences and wait them out. They knew full well that the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms could not keep an army in the field for long – after a few months, men would start drifting back to their homes and fields. To counter this, Alfred realised he needed a standing army, and a mounted one at that, to mute the Vikings' own mobility. So, he set about creating one: "The king's reforms kept half the warriors on duty and half in reserve." The horses were not the great war beasts of the high Medieval period, but smaller animals, ideally suited for carrying the relatively lightly armoured warriors of the time.

## ✠ THE FIRST NAVY?

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* mentions four naval actions in the whole ninth century: Alfred took part in three of them. In his analysis of the Vikings' strategic advantage, Alfred soon realised the importance of sea power, and he set

about trying to counteract that. *The Chronicle* records that Alfred ordered ships be built twice the length of Viking longships, with 60 oars or more. Alfred personally designed them to be faster and steadier than the enemy ships, that they might engage the Danes at sea or soon after landing, and bring superior numbers to bear in a battle whose outcome would be largely determined by strength of numbers. In this respect, Alfred could be said to have founded the English navy.

## ✠ FORTIFIED BURHS

The army and navy provided offensive options, but the kingdom needed defence in depth. To that end, Alfred built fortresses, or burhs, across the kingdom, each carefully placed in a strategic location. But a fortress without men to guard it would be to simply provide strongpoints for the Vikings – Alfred had to ensure manpower. So he created fortified towns, the first since Roman times, with each given sufficient land to ensure it was economically viable, and arranged so that nowhere in Wessex was more than 20 miles – a day's march – from the refuge they provided. In particular, Alfred guarded rivers – building burhs in Southwark, Sashes, Wallingford and Cricklade to guard the Thames – and along the coast to guard the mouths of rivers and the best harbours. Inland burhs were sited to guard the Roman road system and Britain's ancient trackways.



*Alfred fought a few small battles at sea against the invading Vikings*

by shoring up his rule of Wessex, tying the ealdormen (who ruled the shires in the king's name) to him by giving gifts. For its part, the Great Army was employed over the next few years in putting down rebellions and then, finally, taking Mercia under direct control.

The Great Army also had a new leader. His name was Guthrum and he had led the 'great summer army' that had arrived on English shores in 871. When the time came to renew the assault on Wessex, Guthrum's strategy showed that he had learned from the previous campaign. The preferred Viking strategy was to use river systems to sail into the heart of a kingdom, exploiting its political divisions. But while the Thames defined the northern border of Wessex, there were no easily navigable tributaries flowing into the heart of the kingdom. So, in 876, when Guthrum launched a fresh assault on the country, he attacked by land and sea simultaneously.

The Great Army had taken winter quarters in Cambridge but, at night and in secret, a land force, probably mounted, slipped from the town and rode at speed through the heart of Wessex to Wareham in Dorset. Here, Guthrum met a naval expeditionary force that had sailed around the coast from East Anglia. The Northmen set about fortifying their position, set between the rivers Frome and Piddle. As a back-up, Guthrum had also taken Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, which commanded the entrance to the harbour and both secured his rear and allowed for a swift retreat should

it prove necessary. Through this land and sea assault, Guthrum was sending a message to the magnates of Wessex: your king cannot protect you. With his lines of communication secure, all Guthrum had to do was wait, and Alfred knew it.

The warlords met. This was an era when conflict was personal: from the shoving scum of the shieldwall to the face-to-face encounters of negotiators, men met their foes and took their measure. For his part, Alfred was confident he'd struck a deal with Guthrum: gold and hostages and the Viking's oath, taken on his pagan gods, that he would leave Wareham. But Guthrum was after more than gold. He wanted a kingdom. Taking advantage of a slackening in Alfred's siege, Guthrum escaped from Wareham, riding west, outpacing the pursuit. Guthrum left the hostages behind with their throats cut.

Guthrum rode to Exeter. The town lay on the edge of Dumnonia, one of the old kingdoms of the Britons that had only recently been subdued by the Anglo-Saxons. By taking Exeter, was Guthrum sending a message to the

Britons, asking for their backing and allegiance in his war with Alfred? It is certainly possible, but before the old Brythonic nobility could throw their lot in with Guthrum, the Viking's strategy was, quite literally, blown away. His naval forces, sailing to join him in Exeter, were caught in a storm and scattered, with as many as 120 ships lost.

It was time to talk... again. Alfred, in a stronger position, negotiated Guthrum's withdrawal. Watching the Viking leader cross into Mercia, Alfred must have thought that he had weathered the second great assault on his kingdom, but although he had forced Guthrum's retreat, he had not defeated him. Alfred only had one clear victory over the Great Army to his credit; little reassurance to the magnates of Wessex, who would lose everything should their young king fall. While Guthrum resupplied in Mercia, he sent emissaries into Wessex, targeting the ealdormen with an offer: join me, or at the least stand aside, and keep your land when a new king is raised.

It seems that at least one of Alfred's ealdormen listened. Wulfhere, ealdorman of

**“From the shoving scum of the shieldwall to the face-to-face encounters of negotiators, men met their foes and took their measure”**

Wiltshire, was later stripped of his position and lands. With the king's agent suborned, Guthrum was ready to make his move. Alfred and his household spent the Christmas of 877 in Wiltshire, at his estate in Chippenham. They remained there through the 12 days, unaware of what Guthrum was planning. Early in 878, he struck. Once again he moved at night, in winter, and he caught Alfred completely by surprise. Still at least in Chippenham, Alfred heard that Guthrum was moving fast south towards him. With only his household about him, the king faced a stark choice: stay and fight – and die – or flee, sending the message that Guthrum wanted the magnates of Wessex to hear: their king was gone.

Alfred ran but he did not flee. Instead, he started working his way west towards the marshes of the Somerset Levels, a land he knew from boyhood, where he could find sanctuary amid the islets and channels. Safe in the levels, Alfred made camp on the Isle of Athelney and set about doing to the Vikings what they had been doing to the Anglo-Saxons for the last few decades: launching hit-and-run raids that kept the enemy off balance. In the art of mobile warfare, Alfred had been taught by masters. He also sent out messengers, summoning the men of the kingdom to rally to him.

In the seventh week after Easter (that is, between 4 and 10 May 878), Alfred rode from the marshes to Egbert's Stone. He had summoned the men of Somerset, Wiltshire and Hampshire to meet him there. If they came, he would have an army. If they didn't, his cause was lost. Luckily for him, he soon had his army.

Maintaining the pace, Alfred moved north at dawn the next day, while sending scouts to ascertain Guthrum's position. For his part, Guthrum would have quickly heard that Alfred had emerged from the marshes. The Viking king was still in Chippenham and, with his enemy in plain sight, he did not hesitate. Guthrum marched out to meet Alfred, taking position near Bratton Camp, an Iron-Age hillfort on the western edge of Salisbury Plain. The fort, set on a ridge rising to 740 feet (225 metres) above the surrounding countryside, provided clear lines of sight to Alfred's approach. A day later, they saw him – Alfred was approaching.

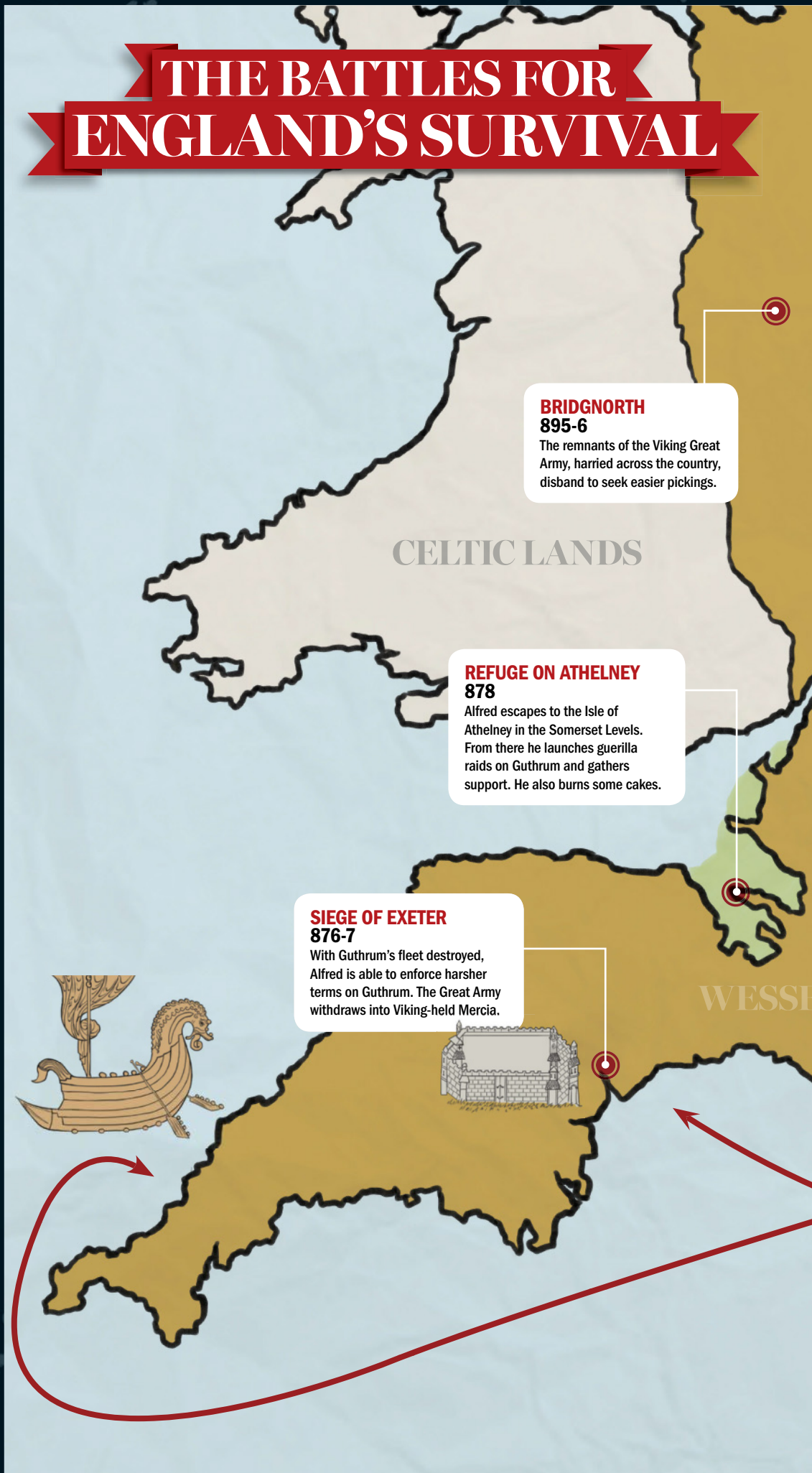
## The fight for England

The Battle of Edington took place between 6 and 12 May 878. It may be the single most important clash in English history. A victory for Guthrum would have ended the last Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Today, we would most likely be speaking a derivative of Old Norse, and England, the land of the Angles, would never have come into existence.

The battle likely took place on the ridge of land in front of the hillfort. Setting his force there, Guthrum could ensure he was not outflanked – an important consideration as Alfred's forces probably outnumbered his. But as Guthrum and the Northmen watched Alfred approach, they would have been confident: the Great Army had the better warriors and the confidence of its history.

Before the shieldwalls met, Alfred's men threw spears that were designed to embed themselves in their enemies' shields and weigh them down. Then, after insults and challenges,

# THE BATTLES FOR ENGLAND'S SURVIVAL



### BRIDGNORTH 895-6

The remnants of the Viking Great Army, harried across the country, disband to seek easier pickings.

### REFUGE ON ATHELNEY 878

Alfred escapes to the Isle of Athelney in the Somerset Levels. From there he launches guerilla raids on Guthrum and gathers support. He also burns some cakes.

### SIEGE OF EXETER 876-7

With Guthrum's fleet destroyed, Alfred is able to enforce harsher terms on Guthrum. The Great Army withdraws into Viking-held Mercia.



**ATTACK ON CHIPPENHAM  
JANUARY 878**

Guthrum launches a surprise raid on Alfred's estate at Chippenham, catching the king completely by surprise. Alfred is forced to flee.

**BATTLE OF EDINGTON  
MAY 878**

Alfred and Guthrum meet in battle near Bratton Castle. The engagement likely happens on the ridgetop and, after fierce fighting, Guthrum is defeated and flees the battlefield.

**BATTLE OF ASHDOWN  
8 JANUARY 871**

Alfred engages the two wings of the Great Army, while his brother waits, and then, when battle is raging, Æthelred attacks. One Viking king is killed along with five earls: a major victory for Wessex.

**BATTLE OF ENGLEFIELD  
31 DECEMBER 870**

Wessex forces take a Viking raiding party by surprise and destroy it. It is the first Anglo-Saxon victory against the Great Army.

**BENFLEET VIKING BASE  
893**

The Milton Regis Vikings sail across the Thames Estuary and make a new base, from which they raid into Mercia.

**MILTON REGIS VIKING BASE  
893**

A second fleet, comprising 80 ships, lands at Milton Regis and sets up camp, threatening the lines of communication between London and Canterbury and within reach of the Pilgrim's Way that leads into the heart of Wessex.

**BATTLE OF READING  
4 JANUARY 871**

Æthelred and Alfred lead an assault on the Viking camp at Reading – and lose, escaping with their lives only with difficulty.

**BATTLE OF BASING  
22 JANUARY 871**

An inconclusive engagement, but one from which Æthelred and Alfred have to withdraw.

**APPLEDORE VIKING BASE  
892**

A fleet of 250 ships set up fortified camp in Romney Marsh.

**SIEGE OF WAREHAM  
876**

Alfred besieges Guthrum. Alfred negotiates, but Guthrum breaks his oath, kills his hostages and marches west to Exeter. His fleet, following, is wrecked off Swanage.

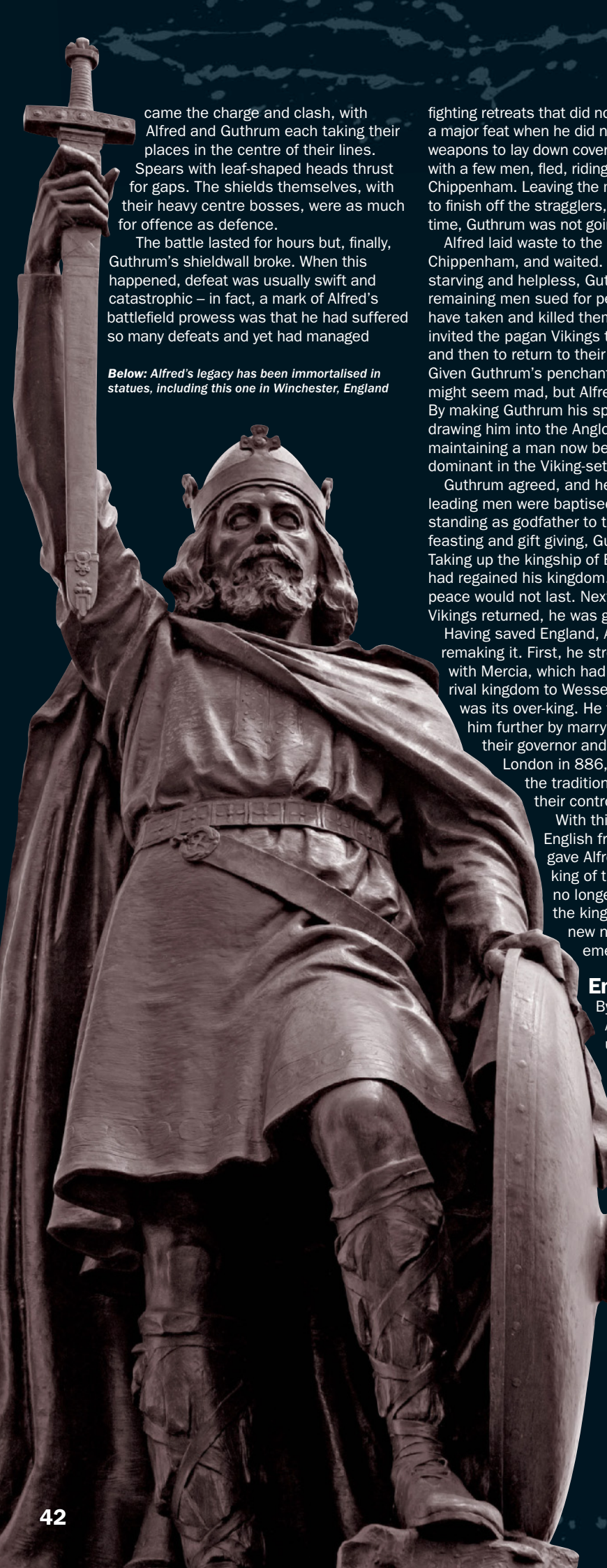
**BATTLE OF WILTON  
1 JULY 871**

The last major engagement of the Year of Battles. Alfred is now in sole command, his brother having died, but the battle ends with victory to the Great Army, although Alfred is able to withdraw.

**BATTLE OF FARNHAM  
893**

Alfred's son, Edward the Elder, catches the Appledore Vikings as they raid into Wessex and defeats them, forcing the remnants of the army to retreat.





came the charge and clash, with Alfred and Guthrum each taking their places in the centre of their lines. Spears with leaf-shaped heads thrust for gaps. The shields themselves, with their heavy centre bosses, were as much for offence as defence.

The battle lasted for hours but, finally, Guthrum's shieldwall broke. When this happened, defeat was usually swift and catastrophic – in fact, a mark of Alfred's battlefield prowess was that he had suffered so many defeats and yet had managed

**Below:** Alfred's legacy has been immortalised in statues, including this one in Winchester, England

fighting retreats that did not turn into routs: a major feat when he did not have ranged weapons to lay down covering fire. Guthrum, with a few men, fled, riding for his base at Chippenham. Leaving the majority of his army to finish off the stragglers, Alfred followed. This time, Guthrum was not going to escape.

Alfred laid waste to the area around Chippenham, and waited. 14 days later, starving and helpless, Guthrum and his remaining men sued for peace. Alfred could have taken and killed them all. Instead, he invited the pagan Vikings to accept baptism, and then to return to their lands with his gifts. Given Guthrum's penchant for treachery, this might seem mad, but Alfred had a clear plan. By making Guthrum his spiritual son, he was drawing him into the Anglo-Saxon world, while maintaining a man now beholden to him as dominant in the Viking-settled parts of Britain.

Guthrum agreed, and he and 30 of his leading men were baptised, with Alfred standing as godfather to the Viking chief. After feasting and gift giving, Guthrum withdrew. Taking up the kingship of East Anglia, Alfred had regained his kingdom. But he knew the peace would not last. Next time, when the Vikings returned, he was going to be ready.

Having saved England, Alfred set about remaking it. First, he strengthened his ties with Mercia, which had for so long been a rival kingdom to Wessex, and by 883 he was its over-king. He tied the Mercians to him further by marrying his daughter to their governor and then, after re-taking London in 886, he tactfully returned the traditionally Mercian town to their control.

With this done, "[a]ll the English free of Danish rule gave Alfred their loyalty." The king of the West Saxons was no longer a tribal ruler but the king of the English. A new nation was poised to emerge from the flames.

### England survives

By the end of the 880s, Alfred had largely set up his new military organisation. Now it awaited the test.

That came in 892. A fleet of 250 ships sailed up the River Rother and made a fortified camp

at Appledore in Kent. The fleet carried families as well as warriors: this was a force intent on conquest. At the same time, a second fleet of 80 ships rounded Kent and made camp at Milton Regis, just south of the Isle of Sheppey. There were now Viking armies encamped on the north and south coasts of Kent.

Alfred responded rapidly, moving his field force to Kent and taking position between the two Viking bases, ready to pursue any breakout. Learning of his presence, the Vikings at Milton Regis negotiated, then sailed across the Thames estuary to make a new base at Benfleet in Essex. But a further Viking force had also assembled and, around Easter 893, sailed west along the Channel, raiding as it went. Making use of this distraction, the Appledore Vikings broke camp and launched a full-scale pillaging raid. Alfred faced a multi-fronted war.

Fortunately, his son, Edward the Elder, was now old enough to lead an army – he caught the plunder-laden train of the Appledore Vikings and defeated them at the Battle of Farnham, forcing the Northmen into a humiliating and booty-less withdrawal. King Alfred himself headed west to deal with the raiders along the Channel, who had landed at Exeter and north Devon. Meanwhile, men from Mercia and London launched an attack on the Viking base at Benfleet, burning the boats they found there and taking many captives.

But the Vikings were not defeated. There followed a confused series of campaigns, with the invaders from Benfleet crisscrossing the country, harried by Alfred's ealdormen, while Alfred himself wore down the Vikings in Devon until they finally gave up and sailed for home. Late in 894, the Benfleet Vikings made a final attempt to wrest some gold and glory from their expedition, sailing into the Thames and then up the River Lea to Hertford. Alfred cut them off by building a double burh downstream. The Vikings were forced to abandon their boats and march west, to Bridgnorth, Shropshire, where, during 896, the army simply dribbled away.

Alfred had faced, and beaten, the largest combined Viking assault on Britain and he had done so not through a set-piece battle but by denying the Vikings the strategic advantages they had previously enjoyed. It was a vindication of his remaking of England.

In 899, Alfred died, and his son, Edward the Elder, and his daughter, Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, continued his policies and strategic vision, gradually bringing the Danelaw under their control. Alfred's grandson, Æthelstan, completed the task. England would be England after all.

**“Alfred laid waste to the area around Chippenham, and waited. 14 days later, starving and helpless, Guthrum and his remaining men sued for peace”**

Images: Alamy; Mary Evans; Thinkstock

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*This propaganda poster from England encouraged support for the Résistance, saying it "helps throttle the Boche"*



**FRENCH RESISTANCE**  
**HELPS THROTTLE THE BOCHE**

# DARK SECRETS OF THE REAL FRENCH RESISTANCE

WORDS JACK GRIFFITHS

Under the oppression of Nazi occupation and the Vichy state, the fight for France was taken up by Frenchmen, women and foreigners alike

**H**itler humiliated France. Defeat in just six weeks and the establishment of the Vichy puppet state brought the country to its knees and its military reputation to ruin. As the Nazi war machine took its blitzkrieg to the rest of Europe, the French found their society taken over by German soldiers. The sheer ferocity and resounding success of the attack had shocked the French people, and before any thoughts of striking back were even comprehended, civilians had to adjust to the new regime.

With the army forcibly reduced to a mere 100,000 men and Marshall Pétain's Vichy government gradually becoming more unconvincing, pockets of opposition began to appear in many parts of occupied France. Known in popular memory as La Résistance Française, the well-known story tells of the

inspirational leadership by exiled general Charles de Gaulle, who roused French men and women with regular motivational broadcasts from across the Channel.

The Gaullist movement assisted the Allies in liberating France, and since then, the image of a Frenchman with machine gun in one hand and cigarette in the other has come to personify the resistance movement in France. Filmmakers were everywhere in the capital on the day of liberation, documenting what was seen by the international audience as La Résistance's finest hour.

However, historical revision has challenged this view, and this idea of the Résistance has become known in some quarters as the 'Gaullist myth'. Contrary to popular belief, there were many different factions involved in La Résistance, each comprising different religions and cultures. They also came from all across

*Right: A French resistance partisan armed with a Sten gun, one of the Résistance's preferred weapons*

**"WE LIVED IN THE SHADOWS AS SOLDIERS OF THE NIGHT, BUT OUR LIVES WERE NOT DARK AND MARTIAL... THERE WERE ARRESTS, TORTURE, AND DEATH FOR SO MANY OF OUR FRIENDS AND COMRADES, AND TRAGEDY AWAITED ALL OF US JUST AROUND THE CORNER. BUT WE DID NOT LIVE IN OR WITH TRAGEDY. WE WERE EXHILARATED BY THE CHALLENGE AND RIGHTNESS OF OUR CAUSE. IT WAS IN MANY WAYS THE WORST OF TIMES AND IN JUST AS MANY WAYS THE BEST OF TIMES, AND THE BEST IS WHAT WE REMEMBER TODAY"**

- JEAN-PIERRE LEVY, LEADER OF THE FRANC-TIREUR



the political spectrum. After the war, de Gaulle and his allies were keen to minimise the efforts of the lesser-known resisters, in particular French communists, to give the new French Fourth Republic as much political leeway as possible in the Cold War to come.

In recent years, the politics of memory has come to the fore in an attempt to realise the efforts of these lesser-known groups and how the Résistance was not just a national rebellion, but part of a European-wide anti-Fascist drive to erase the Nazis.

The defence of their homeland was a patriotic reflex for only some of the French citizens. What is often forgotten in the post-1945 fanfare of Allied victory is that many of the French initially tolerated or even collaborated with the Nazis. One example is the right-wing military group known as the Service d'ordre légionnaire, which was created by war veteran and far-right leaning Joseph Darnard. This group wholeheartedly supported the Vichy

*Right: De Gaulle addressing the people of France on one of his many radio broadcasts from across the Channel. Just how many French heard his motivational words is widely debated*

government and even participated in aiding the German occupation by rounding up Jews.

This assistance to the Third Reich wasn't limited to just France either – the 6,000 men from the Légion des Volontaires Français, or Charlemagne Division, went as far as joining the Wehrmacht and fighting in the USSR after the opening of the Eastern Front.

The vast majority of the French weren't National Socialists of course, and their non-resistance came from the fact that they simply weren't ready to risk the dangers involved in an uprising. They knew the danger was great and did what they could just to survive by keeping their heads down, following Nazi policies as an act of self preservation. Co-operation with the Nazis was also motivated by economic reasons, and by April 1942, French industry had secured



German contracts to the tune of 2.36 billion Reichsmarks. Anyone who wasn't willing to live in a Nazi state fled south across the demarcation line between Vichy and Occupied France. 8 million refugees made the journey, stuffing all they could fit into cars and train carriages. The French Third Republic was over.

In the safety of Britain, de Gaulle believed he was the self-appointed leader of the Free French but very few tuned in to his famous radio appeal on 18 June 1940, and many acted on their own accord and with their own political

**“HATRED TOWARDS THE GERMANS INCREASED DRAMATICALLY OVER THE COUNTRY AND SOME THINGS AS INNOCENT AS A FRENCH GIRL BEING TAKEN TO THE CINEMA BY A WEHRMACHT SOLDIER OUTRAGED FRENCHMEN”**

# ✚ FORGOTTEN HEROES OF THE RESISTANCE

WHILE DE GAULLE WAS ACROSS THE CHANNEL IN THE SAFETY OF LONDON, THESE COURAGEOUS INDIVIDUALS WERE SLUGGING IT OUT AGAINST THE WAFFEN SS ON THE STREETS OF FRANCE

## GUY MÔQUET

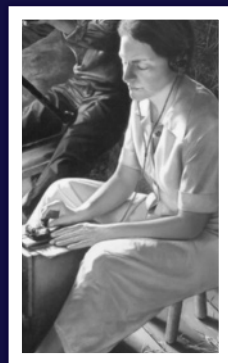
A relatively unknown figure, Môquet was executed at the tender age of 17. Beginning his life of activism as a child, he distributed leaflets filled with anti-Nazi propaganda around marketplaces and cinemas. He was arrested in October 1940 and was one of the revenge victims killed in retaliation to the murder of Karl Hotz.



Môquet is remembered mostly for his emotional final letter to his family once he found out he would be executed

## VIRGINIA HALL

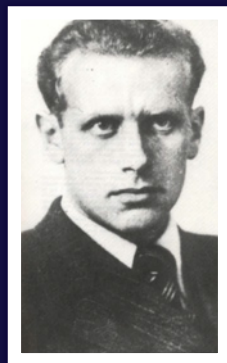
Virginia Hall was a talented speaker of many languages, so the American was naturally an ideal choice for the Résistance. Residing in France when the war began, she was forced to leave the country by suspicious Germans in 1942 but returned as a valuable spy for the OSS.



Hall was known by many aliases including the 'lady with the limp' due to her wooden leg

## BORIS VILDE

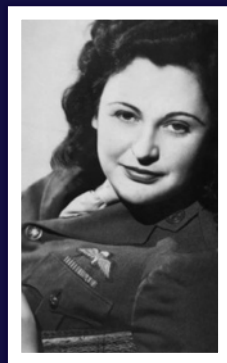
Saint Petersburg-born and Estonian-raised, Vilde first came to Paris in 1934. When war broke out, he became part of the Résistance and utilised his skills in linguistics to help produce the anti-Nazi newspaper *Résistance*. Sadly, his group was infiltrated by Vichy supporters and he met his end at a firing squad in February 1942.



The linguist was so influential that he is credited with introducing the word 'resistance' into the Estonian language

## NANCY WAKE

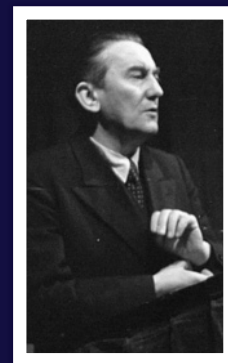
Known as the White Mouse due to her ability to avoid capture, Wake parachuted into France as part of the SOE and became a courier and a saboteur for the Résistance. Reportedly killing an SS guard with her bare hands, she became the Allies' most decorated servicewoman of the entire war.



At her most dangerous, Wake was top of the Gestapo's Most Wanted list and had a 5 million franc bounty on her head

## FRANZ DAHLEM

Dahlem was a German veteran of World War I who had dedicated himself to communism after the war. Fleeing to France, he discussed the idea of creating a 'German Popular Front' against National Socialism but was captured and sent to Mauthausen concentration camp for the remainder of the war.



Dahlem was part of the KPD (German Communist Party) in exile during the war

## ADRIANA SCRIBINA

Scribina was the co-founder of the Armée Juive Zionist resistance movement. Her pseudonyms included Sarah Knut and her activism helped organise the Jewish resistance movements in France. She was killed by the Milice in 1944 and received the Croix de Guerre and Médaille de la Résistance posthumously.



Originally a poet from Russia, Scribina ventured west as a refugee and became involved in Jewish underground movements

and social agendas. In fact, he had next-to-no input for the first year of German occupation. Many had expected the new leader of the Vichy government, Philippe Pétain, the hero of Verdun, to have an ace up his sleeve, but when it became clear that this was not forthcoming, the resistance began.

Beginning as a working-class movement for young men, it is estimated that only up to five per cent of the French population were active resisters, but many others passively opposed the Vichy regime by turning a blind eye to Résistance activities. Hatred towards the Germans increased dramatically over the country and some things as innocent as a French girl being taken to the cinema by a Wehrmacht soldier outraged Frenchmen. These experiences made the Résistance a shared vision and it became an alliance that turned into a community. It never put forward a particular political solution or constitutional framework, it was simply a way of restoring national pride and self respect.

### Many faces of resistance

The different factions that arose fought for very different visions of the world. After the failure of Operation Sealion, it became clear that the British wouldn't be defeated so easily and plans were hatched by the different groups to fight back. The Vichy government complied with its

new overlords and instructed the population not to fight against the Germans, preventing as many troops as possible from leaving the country to take up arms against the Axis in another Allied military.

The French even had to pay the Wehrmacht's occupation costs. As people began to realise that the occupation was the beginning of a forced change of culture into the German Volksgemeinschaft, the rebellions escalated. On 11 November 1940, this anti-German sentiment increased further as French students were apprehended while trying to lay a World War I commemorative wreath at the Arc de Triomphe. Slowly but surely the movement took flight and, to begin with, most acts would be undertaken in secret. A small circulation of anti-Nazi graffiti and leaflets would barely make a dent in the German occupation.

As citizens began to share beliefs, co-ordinated efforts took shape. In the north, the Confrérie Notre-Dame (Notre-Dame Brotherhood), and Alliance groups sprang up, while in the south, Libération-Sud (Liberation South), and Franc-Tireur (Free Shooters, Mavericks) were founded. One group, Défense de la France, was run by students and operated out of a basement below the geology department of their school.

On the whole, the more southern areas of France were less active as they were hesitant

*The French rail network was sabotaged frequently by Résistance fighters, who derailed trains carrying leading Nazi figures*



# THE MILICE: THE ANTI-RESISTANCE

## A SELECT FEW WHO TOOK UP ARMS ON THE SIDE OF THE WEHRMACHT

The collaborationist militia, the Service d'Ordre Legionnaire, had been in existence since the initial invasion of France, but by 1943 it had morphed into the more radical Milice. The group was led by Joseph Darnand, who took a personal oath of loyalty to Hitler and received the rank of Sturmbannführer in the SS. By 1944, the initial 5,000 members had swelled to 35,000 as the group helped the Gestapo hunt down resisters. They were known for being ruthless, taking no prisoners, torturing anyone who didn't comply and even shooting Résistance members who were in hospital. Just one of the counter-resistance movements, but by far the largest, spies from the Milice helped arrest Jean Moulin and several agents from the SOE-sanctioned Prosper Network, whose headquarters was infiltrated by the Sicherheitsdienst (SD).

The Milice often came into contact with the Maquis, with the former often claiming the upper hand as they were supported by the Wehrmacht. The Maquis were an easy target for the Germans and several massacres occurred, as they weren't recognised as a military so weren't under the same regulations as soldiers. The Milice found themselves isolated when the Germans began to retreat and many fled to the Reich. Those who stayed were dealt with harshly after liberation.

**“THEY WERE KNOWN FOR BEING RUTHLESS, TAKING NO PRISONERS, TORTURING ANYONE WHO DIDN'T COMPLY AND EVEN SHOOTING RÉSISTANCE MEMBERS WHO WERE IN HOSPITAL”**

*Below: Members of the Milice proudly carry captured British Bren guns and Lee-Enfield rifles*



to fight a war and invite German occupation. The largest organisation, Libération-Nord, was set up in the north. The brainchild of activists Christian Pineau and Robert Lacoste, the group had close ties to French trade unions and its origins were signed off by the 'manifesto of the 12', which included ten trade unionists from the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) group.

The communists within France also set up a nationwide organisation known as the Front National and swiftly established themselves as one of the most violent groups operating. These organisations often fought among themselves, as they tussled to be the major faction, and it wasn't until later in the war that they would be united under one banner and the common goal to liberate their nation.

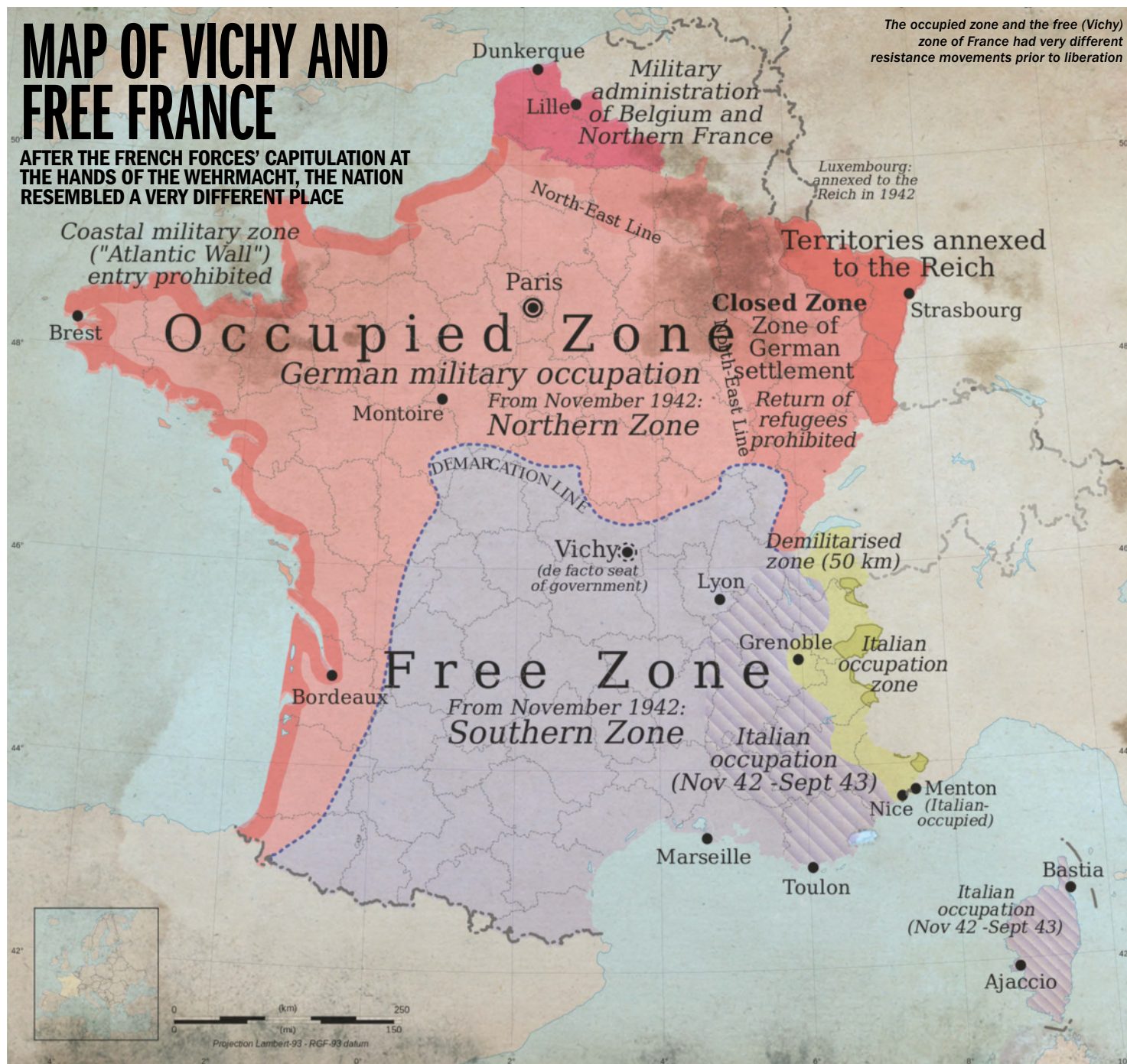
Resistance groups were both violent and non-violent. One of the first major organisations to give any sort of payback was the railway

workers' group, les Cheminots. Their key positions in France's public transportation system meant that they could contribute to the spreading of anti-German literature and the escapes of Résistance members.

By purposely diverting freight to incorrect locations, weakening cement by 'sweetening' it with sugar and causing derailments by being lax on signals, groups such as the Fer Réseau (Iron Network) were formed as the majority of the opposition concerned itself with wearing the German patience down over time.

Underground newspapers such as *Libre-Toi! (Free Yourself!)* and *Sous La Botte (Under The Boot)* were published in the north by the end of 1940, as word began to spread on how best to make life difficult for the occupiers. Even classical texts from French authors came back into circulation to help inspire French nationalism. Dissent via the press was

**“THESE ATTACKS WERE MET WITH DISDAIN BY THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION, WHO DID NOT WANT TO SEE INNOCENT LIVES BEING LOST FOR A CAUSE THEY DID NOT FULLY SUPPORT. AT THIS TIME, THE MAJORITY OF RESISTANCE STILL ADVISED AGAINST VIOLENCE”**







After the Allies became more and more involved, the weaponry and equipment available to the Résistance became much more plentiful

common practice in France and the publication of literature was an efficient way of galvanising people to rise against the Reich.

Music was also important and *Le Chant Des Partisans* (*Song Of The Partisans*) became the unofficial anthem of the Résistance. However, it wasn't long until the Germans cracked down on this discontent. Anyone found would be arrested and deported to a work camp, but these threats didn't stop the movement, and over time its methods of defiance began to branch out.

Individual acts of sabotage became frequent and a popular form of insurrection was the cutting of telephone lines. This resulted in the deaths of many German personnel who were subsequently not informed of incoming RAF bombing raids.

Below: The Vichy authorities were intent on bringing down the Résistance and published many propaganda posters to tarnish the freedom fighters as criminals



One group that quickly made itself invaluable was the Cadix Team – a group of Poles who had made their journey west after the fall of Poland. They passed on their knowledge of how to crack the enigma machine onto their western allies. The group dissolved after its members were captured, but despite being tortured, they never gave away their secret.

As the war in Europe began to escalate, Allied pilots were shot down over the skies of France. They would be smuggled into neutral Switzerland or Spain by the Résistance and given fresh instructions on German military strategies to take back to Allied command.

One of the main organisations that took part in this was a group of French Zionists known as the Armee Juive (Jewish Army), who specialised in smuggling Jews over the Pyrenees. Saving the pilots was undertaken using a number of ratline escape routes, and as soon as the Allies got wind of this rapidly rising movement (approximately 28,000 fugitives were smuggled across the French-Spanish border alone), they sent the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) to help co-ordinate future operations. Now, some of the groups answered directly to these Allied organisations. The first SOE agent dropped into France in May 1941, and it was clear that the age of La Résistance was here to stay.

### From annoyance to threat

On 22 June 1941, the anti-Nazi movements received a boost as all the communist factions within France, in direct response to the launch of Operation Barbarossa, merged into one group. This immediately increased the group's political muscle as the communists took the fight back to the Nazis with direct orders from Moscow ordering the group to disrupt the Third Reich's military.

The Feldkommandant of Nantes, Oberstleutnant Karl Hotz, was assassinated on 20 October 1942, and the group boasted that they were killing more than 500 German

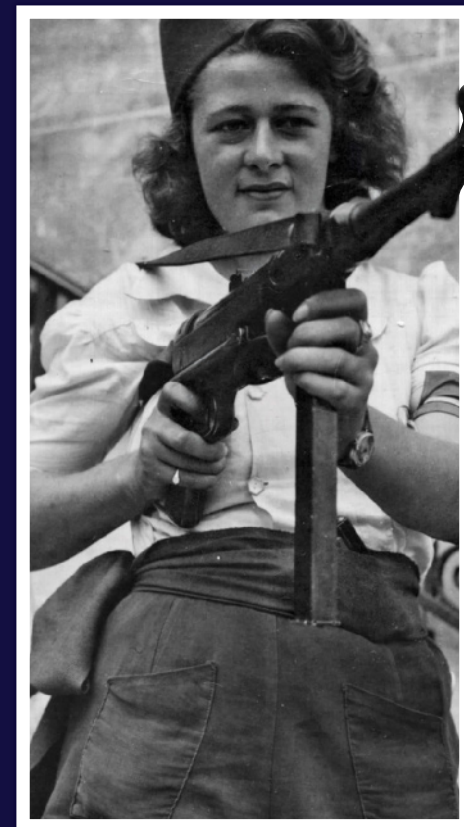
# WOMEN OF THE RESISTANCE

WITH MEN A TOP TARGET FOR ARREST, THE WOMEN OF THE RESISTANCE BECAME INVALUABLE

The role of women was essential to the development of resistance movements in France. 'Madame Lauro' was one fighter who, working alone through the night, would pour hydrochloric and nitric acid on German food supplies in freight cars on the railroads. There weren't just lone fighters though. Marie-Madeleine Fourcade became head of the Alliance Réseau and frequently rendezvoused with the British over supply drops. Her codename was Hedgehog, and after being captured, she escaped prison by squeezing through the bars of her cell window. Another important female was Dédée de Jongh, who was part of the Belgian resistance group Réseau Comète (Comet Line). Prior to her capture she was invaluable in creating and maintaining the escape lines constructed for downed Allied pilots.

Sadly, the Gestapo soon caught on to their actions and 12 SOE agents were executed at Dachau and Natzweiler. After the war, the Résistance helped politicise women in France and in 1946, 5.4 per cent of the deputies elected to the National Assembly were women. The Gaullist myth is not the only part of French Résistance history to be revised, and feminist historians have written many texts, explaining how the role of women was much greater than many were led to believe.

Below: The partisan in this image is known simply as 'Nicole'. She captured 25 Nazis in the town of Chartres and poses here on 23 August 1944



## DARK SECRETS OF THE REAL FRENCH RESISTANCE

soldiers a month. The German reaction to Hotz's death was severe and 50 French hostages were executed immediately as a result. These attacks were met with disdain by the majority of the population, who did not want to see innocent lives being lost for a cause they did not fully support. At this time, the majority of resistance still advised against violence. Underground press and industry sabotage were, at this time, still the main way of fighting back, and anti-Nazi propaganda could now be frequently found on train carriages and in apartment foyers.

As 1941 wore on, SOE agents and Résistance fighters were beginning to communicate freely and coded messages from the BBC were filling the airwaves. There were also now defectors from the Vichy cause. Henri Frenay, a former member of the Vichy administration, began publishing his own underground newspapers. He became so disillusioned that he created his own resistance group: Combat. These added defectors initiated a counter-resistance movement as the Wehrmacht and Gestapo began to rule with an even tighter iron fist. Food was rationed further and access to cars was severely limited to the French. As the Gestapo mobilised, many Résistance fighters fled to the forests of several unoccupied zones for safety and to regroup.

By the summer of 1942, even with the added Gestapo presence, French discontent

had begun to boil over. One of the first examples of open dissatisfaction was on 14 July, Bastille Day in France, where hoards of people took to the streets in national colours. 66 demonstrations took place, but the event was overshadowed two days later by the so called 'Vel d'Hiv Roundup', which saw German soldiers take thousands of Jews into the Parisian cycling stadium, the Vélodrome d'Hiver, for deportation to Auschwitz.

This event demoralised support for the Vichy and Nazi regimes even further, but the demarcation line was proving to be one of the toughest obstacles for a national resistance movement. Naturally, the spread of propaganda and ideology in the occupied north was much trickier, but many also still supported Pétain even if they weren't pro-German. The Résistance realised that battling against the Germans also meant fighting what Vichy stood for: complete collaboration with the Third Reich.

### Throttling the Boche

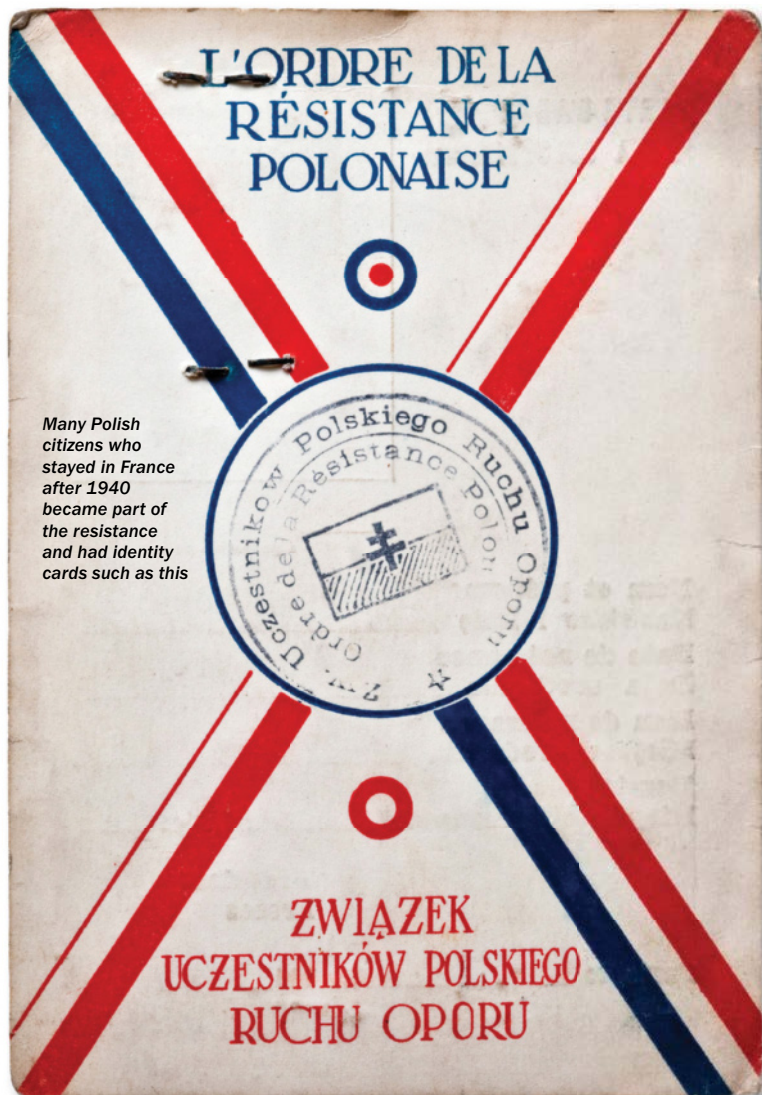
It wasn't only French citizens and the SOE who were getting involved. Albert Guérisse was a member of the Belgian resistance and went under the alias of Patrick Albert O'Leary. Guérisse helped establish the PAT line, which became another effective means of transporting downed pilots to safety. Pilots from as far afield as New Zealand benefitted

from one of these lines, with Kiwi RAF pilot John Morris reliant on one after his burning fighter fell from the sky.

Help also came in the shape of Rene Guiraud – an American spy who came to the fore after the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) became involved in the resistance movement in 1943. Guiraud parachuted into France along with his radio operator to collect intelligence and sabotage German military units. He managed to assemble 1,500 Guerrilla fighters and utilised the men to develop complex intelligence networks. He was eventually caught and sent to Dachau and sadly, as Guiraud was dressed as a civilian, he was technically an illegal combatant, denying him POW rights under the Geneva Convention.

Dachau is infamous for its treatment of Jews in particular, but the most common place for a captured French Résistance member to end up was in Natzweiler-Struthof, a camp in the Alsace. The Nacht und Nebel (Night and Fog) directive against political activists was decreed by Hitler and an estimated 24,000 anti-Fascist fighters (and roughly 56,000 French fighters) from all over Europe were sent to the camp, as for the first time resistance became a truly continental movement.

The Résistance had many Jewish members. Andre Scheinmann escaped Nazi Germany after Kristallnacht in 1938 and, learning that his parents had been imprisoned at Auschwitz,



Many Polish citizens who stayed in France after 1940 became part of the resistance and had identity cards such as this



Above: A captured Résistance fighter. The German caption read: "This communist leader is on the wanted list. His papers prove his affiliation with terrorist groups"

Below: An example of a Résistance card that was used to help identify combatants and what group they belonged to

Nom : PELISSON	Date d'entrée dans la Résistance : 1940
Prénoms : Lucien	dans le Maquis : Décembre 1943
Né le : 7 août 1920 à Ghaulhet	Sous le nom de : Lucien
Département : Gard	Services rendus : Organisation de maquis, missions parachutistes, chef de maquis
Domicile actuel : Ghaulhet	Action du Groupe : Orléans d'Als. action opérative, Combat de Ghaulhet et Castanet
Carte d'identité N° : 27886	Certifié par le Chef de Groupe, [Signature]
	Date de délivrance de la Carte sous le N° 01.201
Le Trésorier, [Signature]	

# WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT OF LA RÉSISTANCE

WITH THE MILITARY OUT OF THE PICTURE, THE FRENCH FREEDOM FIGHTERS WERE FORCED TO USE WHATEVER FIREARMS THEY COULD LAY THEIR HANDS ON



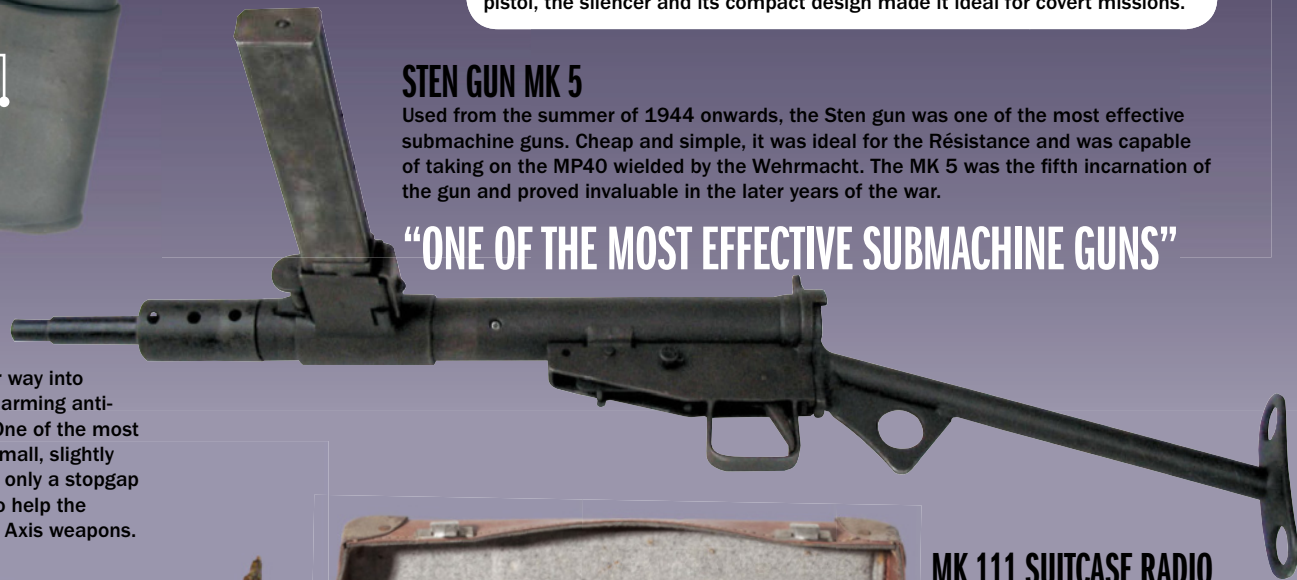
## WELROD CONCEALED PISTOL

The Welrod was a bolt-action pistol designed by the British. They came into the hands of the Résistance through Allied airdrops that arrived from Station IX, a top-secret commando equipment-making base in England. An assassin's pistol, the silencer and its compact design made it ideal for covert missions.

## STEN GUN MK 5

Used from the summer of 1944 onwards, the Sten gun was one of the most effective submachine guns. Cheap and simple, it was ideal for the Résistance and was capable of taking on the MP40 wielded by the Wehrmacht. The MK 5 was the fifth incarnation of the gun and proved invaluable in the later years of the war.

“ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE SUBMACHINE GUNS”



## FP-45 LIBERATOR

As the US forces made their way into Europe, they were intent on arming anti-Nazi groups with firearms. One of the most popular weapons was this small, slightly crude pistol. The FP-45 was only a stopgap and its main function was to help the Résistance to access better Axis weapons.



## MK 111 SUITCASE RADIO

For the SOE agents in France, this was their main means of communication, and espionage was often as important as weaponry. Used in unison with hidden compasses, miniature telescopes and maps, the suitcase radio enabled the different factions to keep in touch and helped co-ordinate the different movements.

“FOR THE SOE AGENTS IN FRANCE, THIS WAS THEIR MAIN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION”

## KAR98K

When British supply drops weren't available, the Résistance would scavenge whatever firearms they could find. Homemade explosives were popular but stealing weapons such as the Kar98k and MP40 off the German occupiers was also popular practice, aggravating the Germans as an added bonus.



## DARK SECRETS OF THE REAL FRENCH RESISTANCE

the former French Army soldier joined up as an interpreter. He worked his way up the hierarchy to become second in command of a network of 300 spies. Using his position in the French national railroad to his advantage, he helped gather information on German troop movements in weekly bulletins. Eventually, the Gestapo got wise, but by the time he was sent to Natzweiler, Scheinmann's work was done. He survived the camp and was awarded the Legion of Honor and the Médaille de la Résistance by the French government after the war.

The camp's most famous inmates could well have been World War I veteran General Charles Delestraint and former commander of the French Seventh Army Aubert Frere. Both served in the Résistance; Delestraint was recruited in 1942 and tasked with commanding the Armée secrète, while Frere was leader of the Organisation de résistance de l'armée (ORA). Many of the prisoners at Natzweiler had links to a group known as the Maquis.

The main arm of violent response in France, the group's origins date back to the spring of 1942, when these freedom fighters sprung up primarily in the Limousin and Puy-de-Dôme regions. Further down the line, they spread to other areas of France and became renowned for their vicious attacks on German forces. If any French POWs escaped the camps, they would frequently end up joining or re-joining the Maquis as they sought retribution.

### United factions

The British were hesitant to give de Gaulle the position of power he desired. Churchill and Roosevelt never trusted him fully and after the disastrous defeat of an Anglo-French force at Dakar in September 1940, the French general

was temporarily frozen out of all military planning.

De Gaulle's contact with France was limited, and in reality he knew very little about the actual resistance movements that were going on in the country. When he announced in October 1941 that he would now direct resistance in France under the new Comité Français de Libération Nationale, there was still quite a way to go for Anglo-French movements to be properly co-ordinated.

De Gaulle's pipe dream would only be properly realised after he had assigned a lieutenant, ex-civil servant Jean Moulin, to undertake his orders in France. As Moulin met with the leaders of the southern resistance groups, Combat, Libération-Sud and Franc-Tireur all came under the umbrella of the Armée secrète. Somewhat reluctantly, a compromise was made for the Résistance leaders to recognise de Gaulle as their leader in return for much-needed material aid from London.

The Résistance had always felt under supplied and under appreciated by the Allied powers, so to bring the faction leaders round to his way of thinking, de Gaulle wrote the 'Declaration to the Resistance Movements' in June 1942, pledging his commitment to 16 resistance organisations for a post-war French



*Left: The Médaille de la Résistance was given out to many major figures after the war but its selective distribution helped the Gaullist memory choose who to honour and who to neglect*

democracy. The communists were the only group not to acknowledge the new pact, nevertheless, the Moulin-led Conseil National de la Résistance (CNR) was in place by mid-1943, and the final stage of resistance could begin.

The escalation of Nazi atrocities encouraged more and more violent responses, and the north in particular became a war zone. The Bruneval Raid provided a chance for the new form of resistance to prove itself, as French intelligence reports allowed British commandos to plan their attack on a radar installation in immaculate detail that would never have been achievable otherwise. It was only in 1943, when Nazi forced labour began to severely affect France, that the majority of the population wanted to completely remove the Germans. This came shortly after Vichy ended and the Wehrmacht occupied all of France to protect against Allied attacks from North Africa under Operation Torch.

One prominent example was on the Alpine plateau of Vercors, where 4,000 French freedom fighters fought against 10,000

**“DE GAULLE’S CONTACT WITH FRANCE WAS LIMITED, AND IN REALITY HE KNEW VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE ACTUAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS GOING ON IN THE COUNTRY”**



*Women accused of collaboration with Nazis are paraded through the streets of Paris barefoot, shaved, and with swastika burn marks on their faces in 1944*

Wehrmacht troops who were forced to call in an air assault to claim victory.

Elsewhere in the country, disruption efforts were becoming increasingly effective. Between January and June 1943, there were 130 acts of sabotage against rail lines every month, and by as early as September of that year, it had increased to a level of 530 per month.

Civilian cars were attached to the German troop transports to ward off bombing attempts, but the French were one step ahead and instead put timers on the explosives so they would only take out their target and not harm civilians. The Germans were struggling to transport equipment, and with the Allies about to break down the door of Fortress Europe, this help was essential to breaking the Wehrmacht.

Prior to Operation Overlord, 93 teams of three agents (one American, one British and one French) were sent to France to co-ordinate the game-changing invasion. France was now in a state of virtual civil war and the communists went one step further by kidnapping and executing Waffen SS member Major Helmut Kämpfe in June 1944. This demonstrated how influential the group had become but ended in disastrous consequences. The incensed Nazis led by Major Otto Dickmann punished these 'terrorists' by torching the village of Oradour-sur-Glane. A small commune in central France, it was destroyed on 10 June 1944 and 600 men, women and children were executed. The remains of the village remain untouched to this day.

When D-Day came, the Résistance was more than ready to help. Some groups helped isolate the 2nd SS Panzer Division in Brittany, preventing reinforcements from amassing on the beaches of Normandy. This is often down-played in contemporary literature, but was integral to the resounding success of the operation, with 3,000 written reports and 700 wireless reports being sent to Allied command in the run up to the operation. Schemes such as Plan Vert, where the Cheminots paralysed the French rail network by destroying 1,800 railway engines, and attacks on garrisons at Tulle and Gueret hastened the Wehrmacht's demise.

Post D-Day, the German forces were reeling, but the work of the Résistance was far from complete. The locals, who now wore armbands with the cross of Lorraine to show their allegiance, helped the Allies push forward and assisted in Operation Dragoon on the country's south coast. They sent small parties to Marseilles, Toulon and Sete to preserve port installations that the Germans were targeting for destruction in a scorched-earth retreat.

General Eisenhower even remarked that the presence of the Résistance was worth 15 divisions in the field. With the Allies and Axis going head to head on the front line, the Résistance was free to liberate the remainder of their country and they were now regarded as legal combatants.

With the countryside virtually conquered (small sections of the Wehrmacht continued to fight hard, in the Colmar Pocket, for instance) the liberation of Paris could start. The Maquis were now under the umbrella of the de Gaulle-initiated Forces Francaises de l'interieur (FFI) and remained active when Allied troops were ashore, benefiting from weapons and millions of French Francs being parachuted into rural areas.

## OTHER EUROPEAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

THE FRENCH RÉSISTANCE IS PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS, BUT OTHER AREAS OF EUROPE ALSO TOOK UP ARMS AGAINST THE NAZIS

### POLISH UNDERGROUND STATE

Poland was one of the most harshly treated nations of the whole war. The Polish capital, Warsaw, was the centre of operations and had the largest resistance system in Europe led by brave patriots. There was an underground parliament and a home army who constantly struggled with both Nazi and Soviet overlords.

*Right: Polish resistance culminated in the courageous Warsaw uprising that resulted in a fierce German backlash*



### NORWEGIAN RESISTANCE

With vast swathes of uninhabited rural land and a border with neutral Sweden, Norway was an ideal country for resistance movements. The Norwegian Secret Army, the Milorg, was integral in helping aid the British commando operations in the country and helped bring down the Quislings, who collaborated with the Nazis.

*Left: Norwegian resisters march away from Akershus fortress after retaking it from the Germans on 22 May 1945*



### BELGIAN RESISTANCE

France's neighbour also had its own resistance movement. Based primarily in the Ardennes, the Allies utilised their regular reports to help improve the accuracy of their European bombing campaigns. As well as intelligence, there were also armed units in Belgium including the Legion Belge, 'Armée Secrète' and Groupe G, who all helped create a solid network of civil resistance.

*Right: A Belgian nurse treats a wounded British soldier as they fight their way through Europe*



### RESISTENZA ITALIAN

Mussolini and his Blackshirts were never universally popular on the Italian peninsula. Resistance was mainly subdued under the Fascist dictatorship but escalated after the Allied landings in Sicily and the establishment of the Italian Social Republic. Italian partisans helped the Allies push the Germans back to the Alps and eventually got their prize, the capture of Il Duce.

*Left: The Resistenza took their anger out on Mussolini and the body of Il Duce was strung up in front of crowds in Milan*



### HOME GUARD

After the fall of France, the threat of a German invasion on British shores was very real. In response, an army of civilian volunteers known as the 'Auxiliary Units' was assembled to carry out sabotage and guerilla attacks in the wake of a potential German invasion. Luckily, it never came to this.

*Right: Auxiliary units formed part of the Home Guard and were trained in the face of a potential invasion*

## DARK SECRETS OF THE REAL FRENCH RESISTANCE

The weapons would be stowed in barns and houses as the Résistance, who now numbered about 100,000 members, did their bit to prevent the Germans from maintaining any sort of reconnaissance network in the country.

### Total liberation

The liberation of Paris on 25 August is remembered for the scenes of jubilation across the capital, and seemingly the work of the French Résistance was done. De Gaulle, imposing himself as liberator-in-chief, officially disbanded all the groups and urged them to join the new French Army, and many did so, signing up to hit back at the Germans as the Third Reich's borders continued to shrink.

Revelations since the war's end have stated that the liberation of Paris could have happened much sooner if it weren't for political interference. The capital city had a high communist population at the time and both Eisenhower and de Gaulle were concerned that a successful liberation by the communists could end in the left taking control of the city. As a result, very few ammunition drops were allowed within the city limits and it was decreed that Paris would be taken only on the Allied forces' mark.

De Gaulle was intent on becoming the head of a new provisional government, and events

such as this sped up his ascension to power as he played the line of not being an active resister nor a collaborator perfectly. His myth of all of France always being united as one helped boost his political appeal. By March 1944, the CNR had already prepared for the end of the war and had social and economic reforms ready to implement. The Fourth Republic was taking shape and would extinguish the tortured memory of the Third.

The Gaullist memory is of Petain being the shield and de Gaulle being the sword that vanquished the Nazi threat. This outlook helped France move on in the tough post-war years and prevented vigilantes from targeting collaborators who had been scapegoated for deserting their country. Only by the 1970s, after the periods of civil unrest in the summer of 1968, when national identity and a social cohesion had stabilised, did the ideology begin to change and the efforts of the real Résistance came to the fore.

As France struggled to come to terms with this so-called 'Vichy Syndrome', the memory of the Résistance became mixed. While some saw their actions as a beacon of hope, they were also seen by others, in the first few years after the war, as terrorists who did as much harm as they did good. Conversely, the idea of any sort of Nazi collaboration is an ongoing sore subject.

A key difference to distinguish is opposition to the Germans and opposition to the Vichy regime. The French citizens who believed in Vichy France didn't necessarily approve of German occupation. The government was a means to an end and it was only in the later years of the war when Nazified laws came into existence and the Nazi atrocities began to worsen that many rallied to action.

Perhaps the most effective way of describing the real Résistance is to remove the idea of it being only one group of resisters and the notion of being either a resister or collaborator, with no in-between. The real Résistance is a combination of things. It began with the passion and dedication of small groups to stand up and fight for their future but only snowballed into the force we remember it being with substantial help from the Allies.

France was not liberated by itself, it was given its freedom by an international coalition and does owe a degree of gratitude to de Gaulle and in particular Moulin for being the driving forces that united each faction. There will always be controversy over the identity of the real Résistance and even if the true fighters were those who rose up prior to June 1944, it will be remembered forever for its crucial contribution to the freedom of France, Gaullist or otherwise.

**“THE REAL RÉSISTANCE IS A COMBINATION OF THINGS. IT BEGAN WITH THE PASSION AND DEDICATION OF SMALL GROUPS TO STAND UP AND FIGHT FOR THEIR FUTURE BUT ONLY SNOWBALLED INTO THE FORCE WE REMEMBER IT BEING WITH SUBSTANTIAL HELP FROM THE ALLIES”**

*The liberation of Paris could have been achieved even earlier if it wasn't for political differences between the Allied commanders and the communist arm of the Resistance*



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Great Battles

# HATTIN

WORDS TALLHA ABDULRAZAQ

The Battle of Hattin heralded the end of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem at the hands of Sultan Saladin





Raging fires lit by Saladin's army severely hindered the Crusaders in battle



## HATTIN, PALESTINE, 4 JULY 1187

Sultan Salahuddin Yusuf al-Ayyubi, also known as ‘Saladin’ in the West, is perhaps most famous for his rivalry with King Richard the Lionheart of England and the events of the Third Crusade. However, perhaps the highlight of his military career against the Crusader States is when he decisively and bloodily ended the Frankish occupation of Palestine at the Horns of Hattin on 4 July 1187. After Hattin, Saladin effectively destroyed the Crusaders’ ability to wage offensive war by annihilating their field army, which then allowed him to recapture many castles and cities in Palestine at his leisure, including the grandest of all prizes – Jerusalem.

### A vow of vengeance

Before embarking on the Islamic version of the Reconquista, Saladin first established his dominion over the lands of other Muslim sultans and dynasties by uniting Egypt and the majority of the Levant (bar, of course, Palestine) in 1182, thereby enabling him to strategically encircle the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, a four-year truce was signed between the sultan and the Crusaders in 1185, but it did not take long for this to be breached by the Crusaders.

Reynald de Chatillon, a knight who held significant lands in Transjordan east of the Jordan River, attacked a Muslim caravan from Egypt bound for Syria in 1186. Reynald captured the caravan, its escort and its treasures, and had his Muslim prisoners tortured and attempted to humiliate them by insulting the Prophet Muhammad. When Saladin demanded from King Guy de Lusignan that the prisoners be released and all property restored to its rightful owners, Reynald refused his liege and said: “I made no peace with Saladin.”

Enraged, Saladin swore vengeance and vowed that if Reynald were ever captured, he would be executed for his transgressions. Not a man to take his vows lightly, Saladin began mustering the largest army he had ever assembled, summoning men from Egypt, Syria and Iraq, and re-started the Jihad, or Holy War, against the Crusaders.

The fighting men in the army numbered approximately 30,000 and, in addition to its accompanying support apparatus, was so large that Saladin told the Caliph in Baghdad that the dust kicked up by its horses and pack animals “darkened the eye of the sun.” He also took advantage of schisms in Guy’s court and made a treaty with the former regent of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, Raymond of Tripoli, who despised Guy and did not accept his legitimacy as king. Raymond allowed Saladin to move a small force into his territory around Lake Tiberias unmolested in April 1187, but this proved to be a calamitous mistake that would cost him, and the Crusaders, dearly.

In order to try to provoke the Crusaders and draw their forces out into a pitched battle, Saladin ordered his men to begin raiding and ravaging lands held by various Crusader lords, particularly Reynald, who held the castle town of Kerak. Saladin’s chevauchée tactics took months to succeed, but in the end, he forced

the Crusaders' hand. At around the time of Raymond's treaty with Saladin, Guy had sent an embassy of notable lords and knights numbering about 500 men to try to reconcile with Raymond. These were set upon by one of Saladin's raiding parties near Nazareth.

This led to the destruction and capture of the Crusader embassy, and to the death of Roger des Moulins, the grand master of the Knights Hospitaller. When this news reached him, Raymond was horrified and believed that the other Crusaders would believe him to be a traitor to Christendom, and so he quickly reconciled with Guy, accepted his legitimacy and promised to help him wage war against Saladin. However, Raymond's move to unite with his fellow Crusaders was too little, too late.

### Setting the snare

Assembling his armies, King Guy mustered 1,200 knights and 18,000 infantry at the highly defensible town of Sephoria. Sat atop a hill overlooking the eastbound road to Tiberias, Sephoria was five miles north of where many of Saladin's forces were positioned, and was bracketed by rugged heights to the north-east and south-east. As he was outnumbered three-to-two, Guy could have opted to wait Saladin out and either draw him to a stalemate or force

him to a challenge on unfavourable ground in front of the well-defended Sephoria. For a while, this seemed to be his plan.

Meanwhile, in late June, Saladin led a reconnaissance in force from his main camp on the southern tip of Lake Tiberias and positioned himself on the plateau of Kafr Sabt, near modern-day Ilaniya. This move allowed him to threaten Raymond's holdings at Tiberias, where his wife, Countess Eschiva, was holding court in his absence. It also positioned the sultan on the main road connecting Tiberias with Sephoria, cutting off Frankish lines of communication between these two cities. To further show that he was serious in his desire to do battle, Saladin took his much smaller force, now 20 miles from his main camp, and stood in full view of the Franks in front of Sephoria, hoping to draw them out. Incredibly, Guy opted to continue to stare at Saladin's army from behind the safety of Sephoria's walls, and thus missed the best chance of the entire campaign to clinch a victory for the Crusaders.

Saladin then tried to find other means to tempt the Franks to fight. He moved the rest of his army to Kafr Sabt, and then split his force into two, personally leading his own guardsmen and some sappers to attack and mine the walls of Tiberias on 2 July. Within the course of a day,

a section of the city's walls were breached, the city plundered and the only structure left with defenders was the main citadel itself, surrounded by a deep moat. As Saladin was preparing to storm the citadel on 3 July, his scouts reported that the Crusaders had finally left Sephoria and were on the march. Saladin gathered the majority of his men and quickly hurried to join the bulk of his force at Kafr Sabt. Guy had finally taken the bait.

### The Horns of Hattin

Guy's decision to march seems to have been made under great pressure. With his holdings and wife threatened with capture, Raymond urged the king to march to the rescue of Countess Eschiva, saying that "if Tiberias falls, all our lands are taken." The king would have little reason to make such a move based on the pleas of a man who was an adversary not long ago, but other notable characters such as Reynald de Chatillon, Guy's erstwhile supporter, added weight to Raymond's words. Also, as Guy had been king for less than a year, he likely felt the need to prove his legitimacy before the nobles who still thought him weak, and to show God favoured him by defeating the Muslims.

Guy divided his army into three, leading the centre himself, with the vanguard and rearguard



*A 20th-century interpretation of Saladin accepting Guy's surrender following the destruction of the Crusader army at Hattin*

Saladin's victory paved the way for the Muslims' recapture of Palestine

## OPPOSING FORCES

### SARACENS

#### LEADER

Salahuddin al-Ayyubi

#### FORCES

Infantry 16,800

Cavalry 12,000

Archers 1,200

### CRUSADERS

#### LEADER

Guy de Lusignan

#### FORCES

Infantry 18,000

Cavalry 1,200

Archers 1,000

**“WITHIN THE COURSE OF A DAY, A SECTION OF THE CITY’S WALLS WERE BREACHED, THE CITY PLUNDERED AND THE ONLY STRUCTURE LEFT WITH DEFENDERS WAS THE MAIN CITADEL ITSELF, SURROUNDED BY A DEEP MOAT”**

commanded by Raymond of Tripoli and Balian of Ibelin respectively. Moving out in column in the scorching summer heat, the Crusaders headed six miles east toward Tiberias and reached the village of Turan and its spring by the afternoon. Turan was easily defensible, enclosed by Mount Turan to the north, with a water supply.

Instead of using this position – with the mountain to his left flank, rugged terrain on his right and a clear line of retreat to Sephoria behind him – to launch harrying attacks to tempt Saladin to meet his force, Guy decided to march on Tiberias, a further nine miles away with only half a day of marching left in hot weather. Guy was too keen to face Saladin in battle, and this would be his undoing. As Saladin said: “Satan incited Guy to do what ran counter to his purpose.”

With his army in tow, Guy made his way even further east, attempting to reach the village of Hattin and its water supply on his way to Tiberias. Hattin lay at the southern foot of two extinct volcanoes adjoined by a plateau that gives this geographical feature its name of ‘The Horns of Hattin’. Likely viewing Guy’s manoeuvre with disbelief, and having superior numbers, Saladin decided to attempt to envelope the Crusader force as it passed the northern ridge of Kafr Sabt.

He sent one wing of his army, led by his trusted Turkmen general Gokburi, to cut off Guy’s water supply and line of retreat by taking up a blocking position on the east-west road connecting Tiberias and Sephoria. He then sent the other wing under his nephew Taqiuddin to deny Guy any escape route north by positioning another blocking force on the valley between Mount Nimrin and the Horns of Hattin. Saladin himself had more than enough men to hold the southern ridge blocking the road to Tiberias, and by the end of the day, the Frankish force had been shepherded in the blistering heat to the rocky slopes of Hattin, and had to spend the night there wondering what calamity would befall them when the next day broke.

Not leaving anything to chance, and fearing the capability of the Frankish knights and their heavy cavalry charges to turn a battle, Saladin spent the entire night preparing his archers to harry these armoured warriors. The Sultan also made his rounds around the camps, inspecting his men and listening to them offer prayers in their tents, asking Allah for victory. Demonstrative of his piety, Saladin came across a tent whose inhabitants were fast asleep rather than praying with the rest of the men, and was said to have remarked: “If we suffer a defeat tomorrow, it will be because of the likes of these men.”

On the morning of 4 July, Guy tried to force his way through to Tiberias, and Saladin’s skirmishers and archers began to whittle his knights down. Although the knights themselves were armoured, their horses rarely were, and so archers could negate their effectiveness on the battlefield by simply shooting their mounts out from under them. A fully armoured knight fighting in hot weather would fatigue quickly, and the battlefield was quickly littered with hundreds of these men pinned by their fallen horses or swinging their swords dismounted,

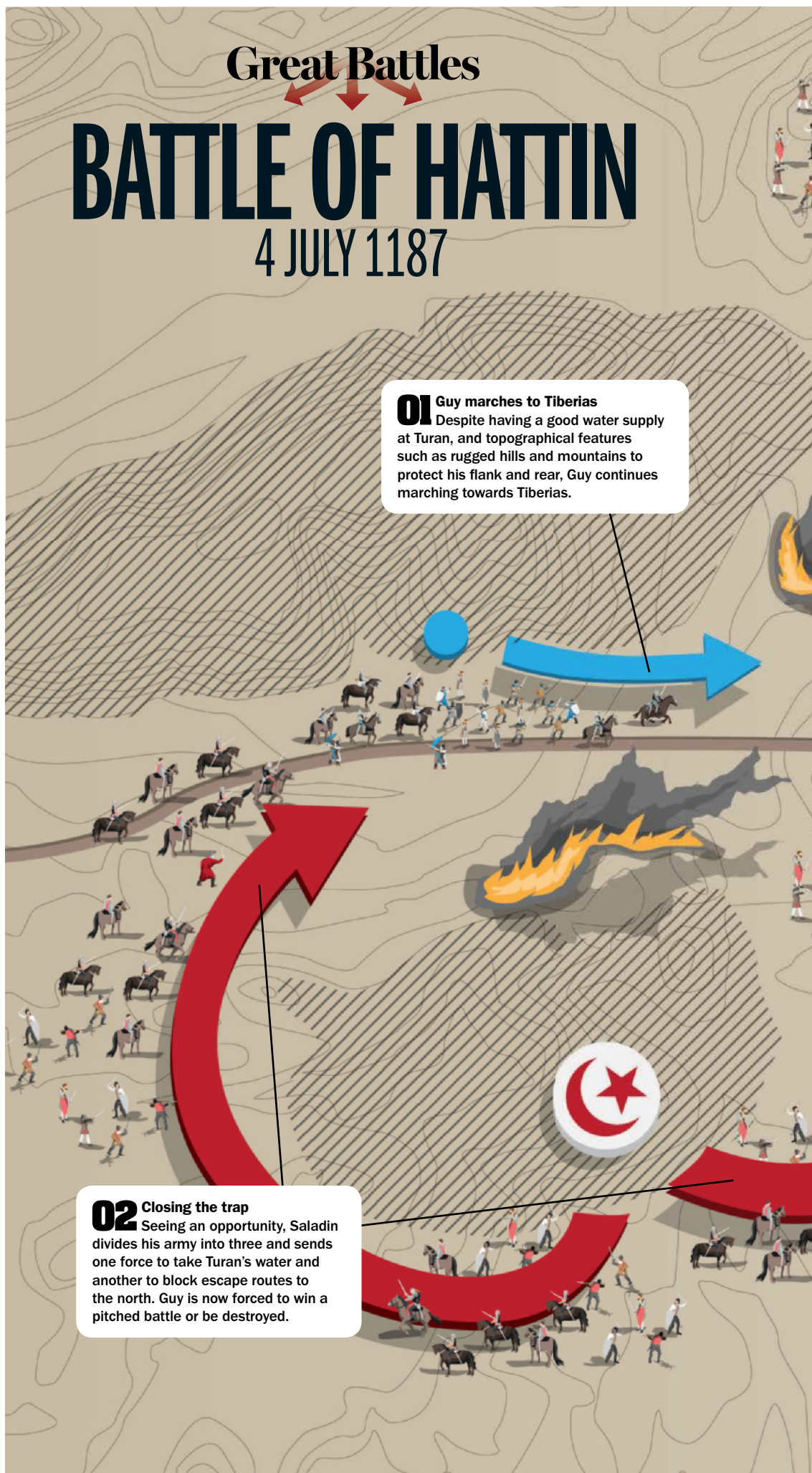
## Great Battles

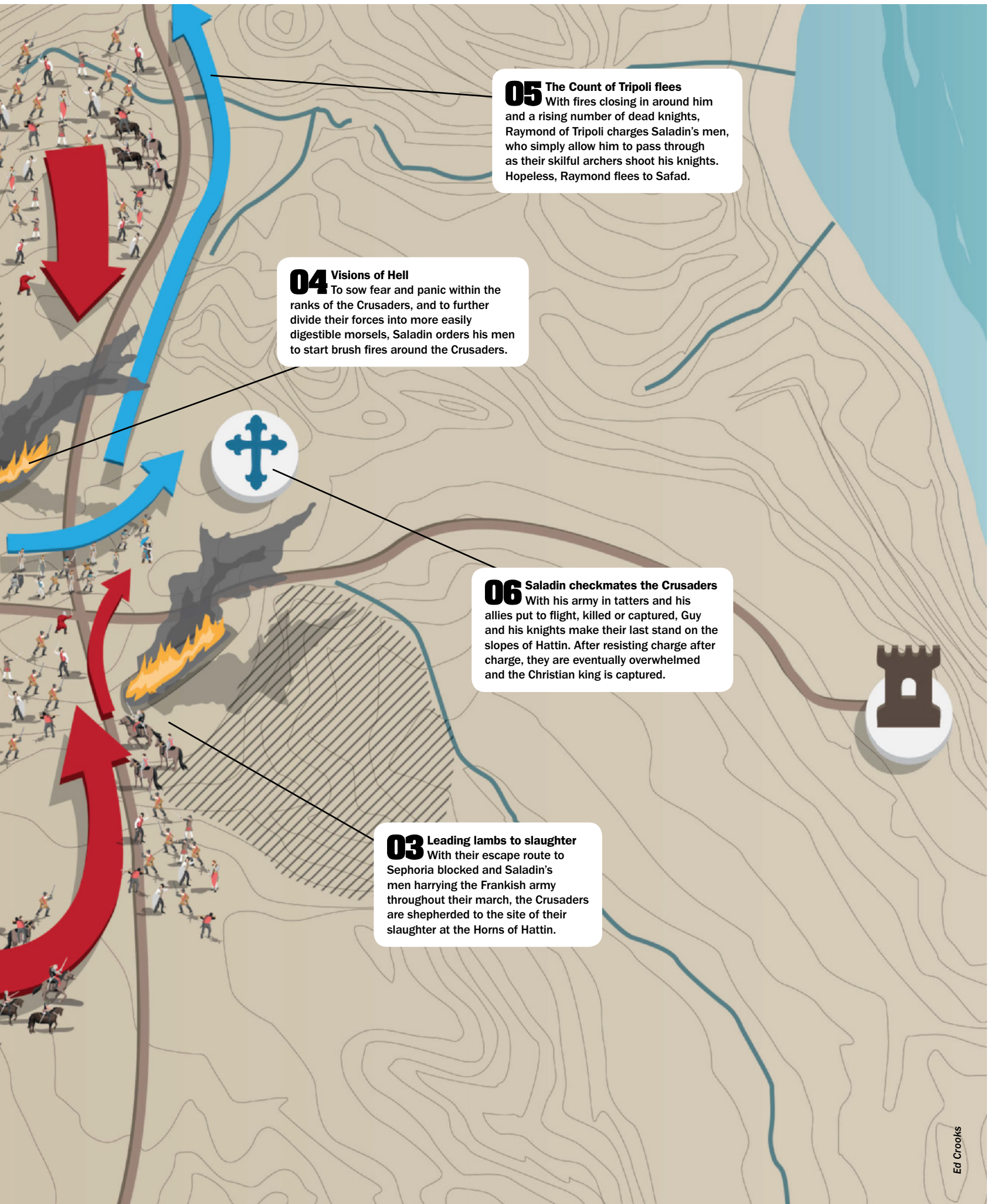
# BATTLE OF HATTIN

4 JULY 1187

**01** Guy marches to Tiberias  
Despite having a good water supply at Turan, and topographical features such as rugged hills and mountains to protect his flank and rear, Guy continues marching towards Tiberias.

**02** Closing the trap  
Seeing an opportunity, Saladin divides his army into three and sends one force to take Turan’s water and another to block escape routes to the north. Guy is now forced to win a pitched battle or be destroyed.





# SARACEN WARRIOR

Saladin's disciplined and faithful soldier



### LIGHT ARMOUR

To stay cool and mobile, Muslim warriors wore lamellar or chainmail over loose short robes and baggy trousers called sirwals.

### SMALL ROUND SHIELD

Famous for their mubarizun duellists, Muslim infantrymen carried these small shields to make them more mobile in hand-to-hand combat.

### DAMASCUS STEEL BLADES

Blades forged from Damascus steel are renowned for their resilience, flexibility and razor-sharp edge, far outshining traditional European long swords.

**“IT IS NOT THE WONT OF KINGS TO KILL KINGS, BUT THIS MAN TRANSGRESSED HIS LIMITS, SO HE HAS SUFFERED WHAT HE HAS SUFFERED”**

summoning up every last ounce of effort, only to be cut down by Saladin's well-fed and watered light cavalry.

Saladin's men then lit a brush fire to blind the Crusaders, already suffering from the heat and thirst. This made them unable to move and vulnerable to repeated attacks that cut down more and more men each time. The light cavalry employed by Muslim armies had long mastered the art of thundering down a slope into an enemy's flank, engaging them in close quarters only to suddenly disengage and repeat the sapping cycle anew.

This led a demoralised and frustrated Raymond to break and charge Taqiuddin's line. Taqiuddin's men were so disciplined that they opened a gap in their formation and shot Raymond's knights as they rode through. Once the count had reached the other side, his forces were so badly destroyed that he carried on riding past Mount Nimrin and did not stop until he reached Safad, about 18 miles north.

With his commanders deserting him, and his men dying all around him, Guy was left with a handful of his knights around his red tent positioned on the slopes of Hattin. It is here that Guy's knights would make their last stand, playing a deadly game of tug of war with Saladin's cavalry. Each time the Muslim horsemen seemed on the cusp of winning the day, Guy's knights would charge them and push them all the way back down the hill. Saladin was said to have grasped his beard in distress as he watched his men charge Guy's tent three

times, and fail. As he told his son, al-Afdal, "we shall not defeat them until that tent falls," the king's tent was finally taken, surrounded by the corpses of its stubborn defenders.

### The road to Jerusalem

After the battle had ended and what remained of the Crusaders were captured or killed, the major catch of the day, Guy and Reynald, were brought before Saladin in his tent. Being a man of uncommon chivalry and honour, a character trait attested by both Christian and Muslim sources, Saladin offered an iced goblet of rose-scented water to the parched and haggard Christian king, who drank to refresh himself before handing the remainder to Reynald.

Upon seeing his sworn enemy also drinking, Saladin indicated towards Reynald and asked his interpreter to tell Guy: "You are the one giving him a drink. I have not given him any drink." Saladin was a firm believer in Islamic customs and traditions of hospitality, which dictated that those with whom food and drink is shared must be granted peace and safety.

However, as he did not offer Reynald any sustenance, he was not obliged to hold to that custom, even if the captured king had decided to give one of his retainers a drink. Even more so, Saladin had twice sworn to kill Reynald, first when he and his pirates raided Muslim villages on the Red Sea and threatened Mecca and Medina, and second when Reynald captured the caravan in the prelude to Hattin. Honour-bound to fulfil his pledge, Saladin drew his

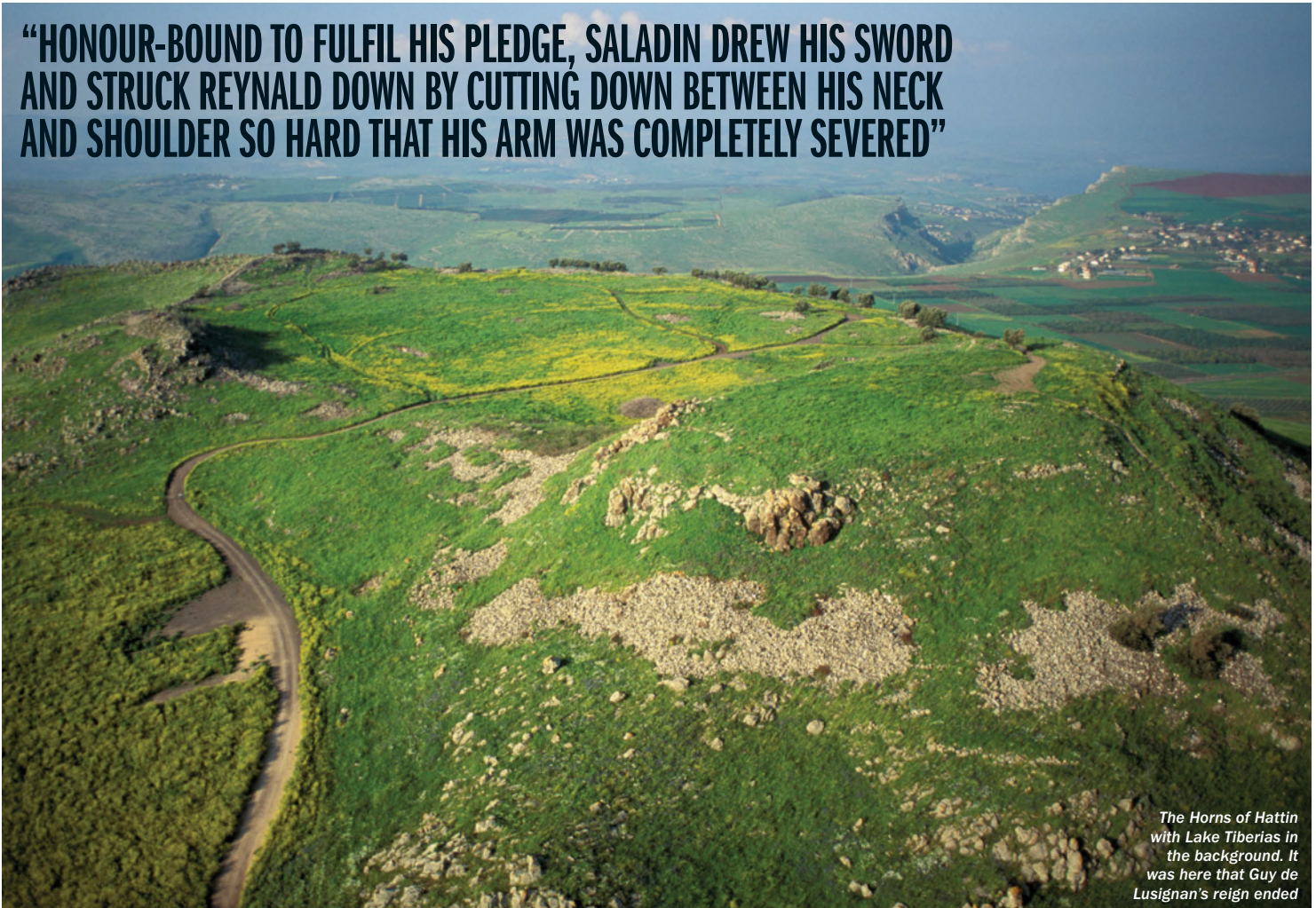
sword and struck Reynald down by cutting down between his neck and shoulder so hard that his arm was completely severed.

After Reynald crumpled to the ground, blood pouring from his wound, Saladin proceeded to cut Reynald's head off and ensured that one of the Muslims' greatest foes who had harmed them for decades would never bother them again. Next, Saladin dragged Reynald's corpse before Guy, who became ashen-faced with fear. Saladin reassured him by saying: "It is not the wont of kings to kill kings, but this man transgressed his limits, so he has suffered what he has suffered."

The prisoners were marched off to Damascus, Saladin's capital, and the True Cross was hung upside down and paraded by the victorious Muslims as a sure sign that the Crusaders were finally defeated.

Deprived of their offensive capabilities, the Franks were forced to relinquish Jerusalem on 2 October 1187. Refusing to repay the bloodbath that the Crusaders inflicted upon the original inhabitants of Jerusalem 88 years earlier, Saladin allowed the vast majority of them to leave in peace, and then resettled those Jewish and Muslim families who had been forced to leave their ancestral homes almost a century earlier. Through his victory at Hattin, Saladin had paved the road for the restoration of Jerusalem into Muslim hands with the blood of the entire Crusader field army.

**"HONOUR-BOUND TO FULFIL HIS PLEDGE, SALADIN DREW HIS SWORD AND STRUCK REYNALD DOWN BY CUTTING DOWN BETWEEN HIS NECK AND SHOULDER SO HARD THAT HIS ARM WAS COMPLETELY SEVERED"**



*The Horns of Hattin with Lake Tiberias in the background. It was here that Guy de Lusignan's reign ended*



## Heroes of the Victoria Cross



# NOEL CHAVASSE

An Olympian turned army doctor whose acts of bravery on the Western Front earned him not one, but two Victoria Crosses

WORDS JACK GRIFFITHS

Looking after your own skin in war is tough enough, but being responsible for others while bullets zip over your head is another level. Captain Noel Chavasse was one of a rare breed of men willing to put their lives on the line to save others during the four years of horror on the Western Front. Born on 9 November 1884 in Oxford and later raised in Liverpool, Chavasse was the son of a bishop and one of seven children. His religious upbringing meant he obtained strong beliefs and a balanced temperament from regular Sunday observance, and it was ingrained in him from a young age to help those less fortunate than himself.

Before turning his hand to medicine, Chavasse was also a keen rugby and lacrosse player and even represented Team GB at the 1908 London Olympics, running in the heats of the 400 metres along with his identical twin brother Christopher. Putting his sporting and athletic career to one side, Chavasse studied medicine and qualified as a doctor in 1912 after graduating with first-class honours in philosophy from Trinity College, Oxford, in 1907. He went on to study blood plasma for a year, becoming a prize-winning academic in his field and joining the Oxford University Officer Training Corps Medical Unit, which gave him a solid grounding in the practice of military medicine. After a brief stint in Dublin and acceptance into the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, he became an

expert in orthopaedics, and both the house physician and house surgeon of the Royal Southern Hospital in Liverpool. This education allowed Chavasse to carry out his passion of helping those in need. Like every young man in England, however, his world would be turned upside down by the outbreak of World War I.

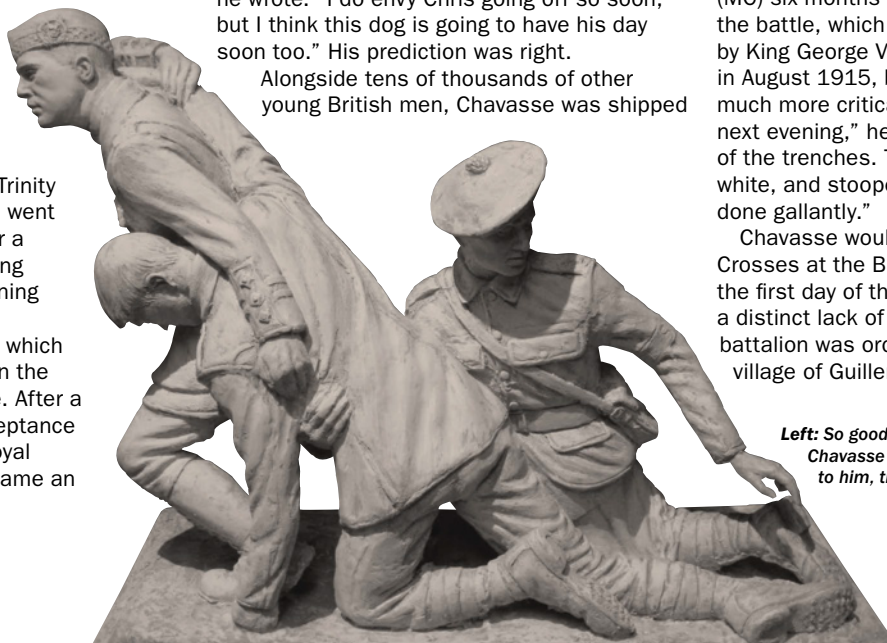
Commissioned into the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) as a lieutenant in 1913, Chavasse's letters from the time show a very positive attitude towards the possibility of entering the war. "If ever I get sent to the front with a regiment, I shall almost shed tears of joy," wrote Chavasse in a letter. Noel wasn't the only Chavasse to be sent to war. His twin brother Christopher was appointed as a chaplain in the Royal Army Chaplain's Department and had already stepped ashore on mainland Europe before Noel got the chance. Jealous of his brother's call to duty, he wrote: "I do envy Chris going off so soon, but I think this dog is going to have his day soon too." His prediction was right.

Alongside tens of thousands of other young British men, Chavasse was shipped

over to the continent in 1914 to serve on the Western Front in both France and Belgium. He was part of the Liverpool Scottish Unit, and from the word go, Chavasse, a triage and wound-dressing expert, was inundated with soldiers suffering from trench foot and all manner of conditions. Believing God was on his side and possessing an unwavering patriotism, many of the troops soon became aware of his enthusiastic and driven nature. His first taste of battle came at Hooge near Ypres in 1915. One of the fiercest battles of what was fast becoming a bloody war, 900 men from Chavasse's battalion died with only 140 surviving the German onslaught of gunfire and poison gas. The young doctor ventured into no man's land for more than 48 hours and only stopped when he was convinced that there was no one else who required treatment.

Chavasse was awarded the Military Cross (MC) six months later for his bravery during the battle, which was given to him personally by King George V. He was promoted to captain in August 1915, but had now established a much more critical outlook on the war. "The next evening," he wrote, "the men came out of the trenches. The young men were haggard, white, and stooped like old men, but they had done gallantly."

Chavasse would earn the first of his Victoria Crosses at the Battle of the Somme. It was the first day of the offensive and, despite a distinct lack of any reconnaissance, his battalion was ordered to assault the fortified village of Guillemont at 4.20am on 27 July



Left: So good, they rewarded him twice. Noel Chavasse has at least 16 memorials dedicated to him, the most of any Victoria Cross holder



..... ● .....

**“Letters from the Front have constantly told how eager he was, how ready he was to expose himself to dangers beyond those called for in the discharge of his duties”**

Extract from an article in the *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury* newspaper

..... ● .....



*A man of great integrity, Chavasse dipped into his own pockets and bought 1,000 socks to help his battalion survive the harsh conditions of the Western Front*

“Hell would have been heaven compared to the place he was in, but he never troubled about it”

A Canadian machine gunner in an interview with the Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury newspaper

1916. In what would become one of the bloodiest battles in the history of war, many British lives were lost at the hands of the Germans, with the 10th Battalion among them. 189 men out of 600 were gunned down within a matter of hours.

With the sheer amount of men dying in the mud, Chavasse was overwhelmed with casualties. Incredibly overworked, the doctor laboured long into the night, tending to as many of his companions as possible and making sure he picked up as many identity discs as he could. The next day he recruited a stretcher-bearer to work alongside him and scampered along the lines, twice being hit by shrapnel but still summoning the stamina to carry a wounded soldier 500 metres (1,640 feet) to safety.

His heroics weren't finished there and, taking matters into his own hands, Chavasse assembled a team of 20 volunteers who helped him miraculously rescue three men from a shell hole that was just 23 metres (75 feet) from the German frontline. His battalion had now been pinned down by gunfire for two long days but it is estimated that the brave doctor rescued 20 seriously wounded men in this time. He received his medal at Buckingham Palace, February 1917.

The Somme had a profound affect on the battle-weary captain, who was now bitter

about his country's involvement in the war, stating in one of his letters: “We all hate the war worse than we thought we could.” However, it was obvious that there was still some fight in him, with a quote from the same period that showed his trademark helpful nature was still intact: “It is only the faces of the men that keep me anxious to help them at all times.” This determined attitude helped Chavasse make what would end up being a life-changing decision. After being awarded the VC, he could have easily withdrawn behind the lines and taken up a surgeon's post in a base hospital. This safer role would have matched his skills perfectly, but he declined, preferring to be on the frontline.

World War I saw a huge development and investment in medical equipment and medicine. Warfare had come a long way since the 19th century and modern machine guns, artillery shells and tanks could cause serious damage to the human body. It wasn't until 1917 that the idea of stockpiling blood was first put into practice, and often there was not much Chavasse and his fellow doctors and medics could do apart from stretcher the wounded off the battlefield as quickly as possible and refer them via motor ambulance to the nearest casualty clearing station.

One of the great successes of wartime medical procedures was the Thomas Splint. Invented by Welsh surgeon Hugh Owen Thomas, the strap ensured that 80 per cent of soldiers with broken femurs survived. Prior to

Below: Canadian soldiers make their way across the muddy battlefield of Passchendaele, 1917



**01 Advanced first aid post**

31 July 1917 and the battle of Passchendaele is under way. Noel Chavasse sets up an advanced first aid post in a captured German dugout to tend to the injured troops. There are already many requiring his expertise.

**02 It's only a head wound!**

The shelling on Chavasse's position is intense from the start and it isn't long until he himself is struck. He suffers a fractured skull and, after receiving treatment, defies advice to withdraw and continues to venture into no man's land to heal the wounded soldiers on the battlefield.

**03 Further shelling**

The German artillery barrage is relentless. Stretcher-bearers ferry as many men as possible to safety while Chavasse stays put, weary and with barely any food or water, and continues to treat the wounded. The shelling lasts for days as the British and French forces are pinned down, barely making any ground.

**04 Injured again but still not defeated**

On 2 August, the bunker suffers a direct hit from a German shell. The subsequent explosion gives Chavasse a severely gashed abdomen that almost incapacitates him. So far forward from many of the British positions, he is a long way from help and the rest of the bunker's occupants are now dead or injured.

**05 The final push**

With no other alternative, Chavasse begins to painstakingly crawl half a mile for help. Now suffering from at least six injuries, he is finally found and taken to a casualty clearing station, but it is too late and the brave doctor dies from his wounds.



the invention, the statistic was the other way round, and 80 per cent who suffered the injury died from their wounds.

For his part, Chavasse trained all his stretcher-bearers in first aid as well as reworking the field hospitals he served in to ensure they were as sanitary as possible. He provided warm and dry clothing whenever possible and advised the men to always have a hot bath if the opportunity arose. He was also one of the few who understood shell shock before it was commonly identified in medical circles. To this doctor, hygiene to prevent lice, avoiding trench foot and keeping a positive mental attitude were vital. Despite his talent, Chavasse never rose higher than captain – likely due to his criticism of his superiors and his empathy towards the Germans on the other side of no man’s land.

After the Somme, Chavasse’s parents heard of their son’s wounds but their fears were

allayed with the following letter. “Don’t be in the least upset if you hear I am wounded. It is absolutely nothing. The merest particle of shell just frisked me. I did not even know about it until I undressed at night,” he said, with only a hint of understatement. He also calmed their nerves by stating that “his blood was not heroic.” He was a doctor who was equally as humble as he was skilled.

Next, Chavasse found himself thrust into the Third Battle of Ypres (Battle of Passchendaele). By now he was a veteran of the field, and the doctor began by setting up an advanced first-aid post in a captured German dugout to be able to treat the troops closer to the action. Unfortunately, by the start of August, the British were struggling to advance on enemy strongpoints and the Imperial German Army was becoming relentless in its artillery barrages, constantly shelling the position.

*Above: Many soldiers owe their lives to the work of Noel Chavasse in the field*

Mustard gas had killed 141 men by the time Chavasse was struck in the head, fracturing his skull. Receiving treatment, he was advised to leave the frontline and seek further medical attention, but refused and promptly returned to his post. Continued bombardment led to him receiving two more head injuries, but he stuck to his duty, tending to an almost constant stream of wounded men, despite

## CHAVASSE’S VICTORIA CROSS CITATIONS

### FIRST VC CITATION

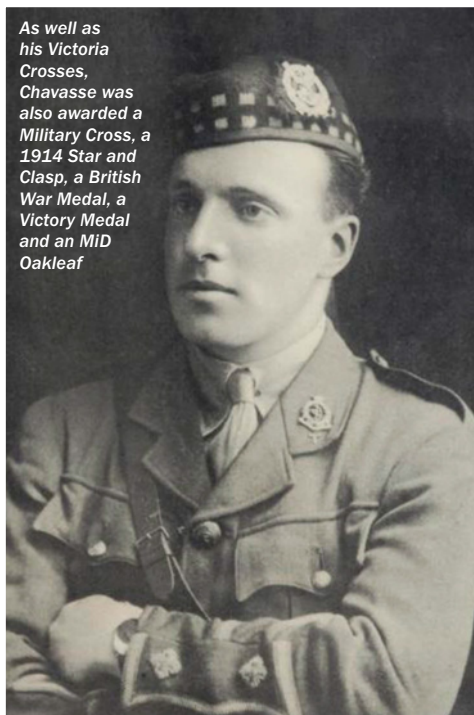
“Altogether he saved the lives of some 20 badly wounded men, besides the ordinary cases which passed through his hands. His courage and self-sacrifice were beyond praise.”

### SECOND VC CITATION

“Though severely wounded early in the action whilst carrying a wounded soldier to the dressing station, he refused to leave his post, and for two days not only

continued to perform his duties but went out repeatedly under enemy fire to search for and attend to the wounded who were lying out. During these searches, although practically without food, he assisted to carry a number of badly wounded men over heavy and difficult ground. By his extraordinary energy and inspiring example he was instrumental in rescuing many who would have otherwise undoubtedly succumbed under the bad weather conditions. This devoted and gallant officer subsequently died of his wounds.”

*As well as his Victoria Crosses, Chavasse was also awarded a Military Cross, a 1914 Star and Clasp, a British War Medal, a Victory Medal and an MID Oakleaf*



**“I constantly met your son and appreciated his work. He was quite the most gallant and modest man I have ever met, and I should think the best liked”**

**A letter sent to Chavasse's parents by Brig-Gen LG Wilkinson, who commanded the 166th Brigade until April 1917**

being incredibly weary, hungry and now in excruciating pain. Sadly, Chavasse's stubborn refusal to quit led to his untimely death.

While taking a rare break, another shell hit the roof of the bunker and the explosion screamed through the back door. The doctor was left with a severe stomach wound and everyone within the bunker walls was either killed or badly wounded. Chavasse, now virtually unrecognisable due to his injuries, used his final ounce of strength to crawl for half a mile to signal for aid.

Help eventually arrived and he managed to make it to a clearing station, but died of his wounds two days later at about 1pm on 4 August aged just 32. Prior to passing away, his final words were reserved for his fiancée Gladys, and he simply said: "Duty called and called me to obey," before his body gave in. He was due to marry Gladys later that month and she had even moved to Paris to be near to him. Noel's second Victoria Cross was not much solace for his grief-stricken fiancée.

Noel Chavasse was buried in Brandhoek at Vlamertinghe New Military Cemetery in Belgium about 20 kilometres (12.7 miles) from the battlefield at Passchendaele, and the remaining men of his regiment and many other medical officers were all in attendance. There was also a memorial service held in his honour in the Parish Church of St Nicholas in Liverpool, and his parents, Francis and Edith, received his posthumous medal in his honour.

A bronze memorial was unveiled in August 2008 and stands outside 19 Abercromby Square, Liverpool, the Chavasse family home. Christopher survived the war, rising to the equivalent rank of lieutenant colonel, and their younger brother, Bernard, also served as a battalion medical officer. Sadly, the youngest Chavasse brother, Aidan, didn't make it through the war and passed away on 4 July 1917 in the Ypres Salient. His family didn't initially realise he had passed and sent out a system of enquiries before his death was made official in February 1918.

Both Bernard and Christopher were awarded the Military Cross for their service. It wasn't just the male members of the family who served king and country in World War I, though. Younger sister May worked as a war maid in the Liverpool Merchants mobile hospital in Étapes in northern France. Her work was highly regarded and she received a special mention in dispatches.

Chavasse's memory lives on in the hearts of Liverpoolians, and in a 2003 poll of the '100 greatest Merseysiders', he came in third place above legendary football manager Bill

Shankly, renowned 19th-century politician William Gladstone and former Beatle George Harrison. Up until her death in 1962, Chavasse's fiancée Gladys regularly visited the grave of her husband-to-be and would annually mark the anniversary of his death with an 'in memoriam' notice in the *Times* newspaper.

Captain Noel Godfrey Chavasse remains one of the most highly decorated British servicemen of the war, as well as the only man to have received two Victoria Crosses during the conflict. Never firing a single shot in anger, he worked tirelessly for long periods often without food and water. He wasn't afraid to run right in front of German cross hairs to save wounded troops and would search throughout the night for anyone left behind in no man's land. No matter how faint he felt or how many injuries he sustained, he would be there, bounding across muddy shrapnel-filled fields to help his fellow man.



*Chavasse's headstone represents both of his VCs. The inscription was chosen by his father and reads: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"*

## DOUBLE VICTORIA CROSS RECIPIENTS

### CAPTAIN ARTHUR MARTIN-LEAKE

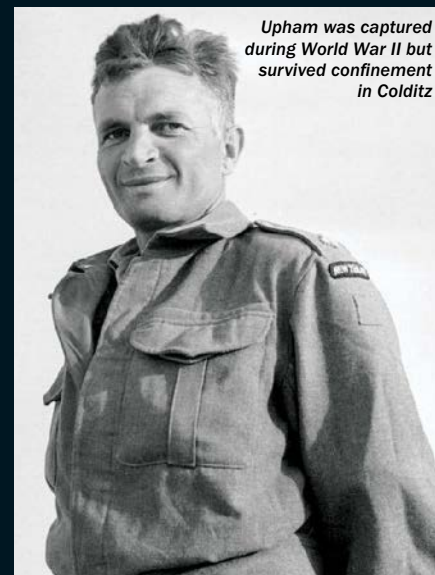
Another man involved in army surgery, Martin-Leake won his first VC in 1902 during the Boer War after treating wounded soldiers just 100 metres (328 feet) from an enemy trench. He was shot by a Boer rifle but soldiered on until he collapsed from exhaustion. His second VC was awarded 12 years later on the Western Front as he once again saved many of his comrades while under heavy fire.



*On the battlefield, Martin-Leake would demand that water be given to the wounded before him*

### CAPTAIN CHARLES UPHAM

Charles Upham's first VC was awarded for his outstanding leadership during the Allied defeat at the 1941 Battle of Crete. Already nursing a wound from a mortar shell, the brave captain carried a wounded soldier out of the firing line, and eight days later he single-handedly killed 22 Germans. Several years later he received the accolade once again when he brought down a tank despite one of his arms being shattered by machine-gun fire.



*Upham was captured during World War II but survived confinement in Colditz*

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# NIMROD



## NIMROD MR2

**CREW:** 13  
**CAPACITY:** 24  
**HEIGHT:** 9.14M (31FT)  
**LENGTH:** 38.65M (126FT 9IN)  
**WINGSPAN:** 35M (114FT 10IN)  
**WING AREA:** 197.05M<sup>2</sup> (2,121 SQ FT)  
**CRUISE SPEED:** 787KM/H (490MPH)

**MAXIMUM SPEED:** 923KM/H (575MPH)  
**MAX TAKEOFF WEIGHT:** 87,090KG (192,000LB)  
**RANGE:** 8,340-9,265KM (5,180-5,755 MILES)  
**SERVICE CEILING:** 13,411M (44,000FT)  
**ENGINES:** 4 × ROLLS-ROYCE SPEY TURBOFANS, 54.09 KN (12,160 LBF) EACH

“KNOWN AS THE ‘MIGHTY HUNTER’ AFTER THE BIBLICAL CHARACTER, THE NIMROD MR2 CAN CHART ITS HISTORY ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE DE HAVILLAND COMET MARK 4C”



# MR2

WORDS & IMAGES NEILL WATSON



Two 51 Squadron Nimrod MR1s, the previous incarnation of the MR2, fly in formation

This uniquely capable recon aircraft was born to stalk Soviet submarines and went on to serve for another four decades



The Nimrod MR2 retired from Royal Air Force service in 2011, after 42 years of flying. While it was originally created as a Cold War maritime reconnaissance and attack aircraft to hunt and destroy Soviet submarines, the Nimrod played an incredibly diverse role over many decades. From lengthy patrols against shipping in the Falklands War to co-ordinating the rescue efforts of the Piper Alpha oil rig disaster, all the way to providing overland communications and surveillance in Afghanistan, the Nimrod's unique skill set offered an unmatched, diverse capability. Its replacement, the MRA4, was axed by the UK government, and to this day, UK armed forces

do not have a direct replacement for the uniquely capable Nimrod.

Known as the 'Mighty Hunter' after the biblical character, the Nimrod MR2 can chart its history all the way back to the de Havilland Comet Mark 4C. The Comet was the world's first jet-powered airliner and the first jet aircraft to cross the Atlantic Ocean from London to New York nonstop.

In June 1963, Air Staff Requirement 381 was issued calling for a replacement to the ageing Avro Shackleton, to enter service by 1966. Three years is an incredibly short development time for such a complex aircraft. In response, Hawker Siddeley offered a solution in the shape

of a heavily modified Comet Mark 4, fitted with more powerful Rolls-Royce Spey engines. The original contract was for 38 aircraft, and these served until the beginning of 1975, when 31 were re-engineered and upgraded to MR2 specification. This included more advanced electronic systems to diversify away from the maritime role, plus enhanced search-and-rescue capability.

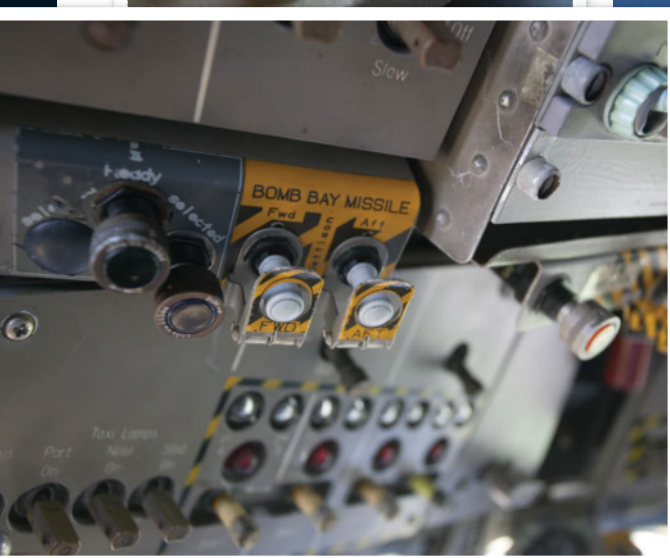
This aircraft is Nimrod MR2 XV250, now on permanent display at The Yorkshire Aircraft Museum. It is maintained in full running condition as it was delivered from RAF Kinloss, complete with working Rolls-Royce Spey engines and an almost completely intact interior, resplendent with the suite of complex equipment required for its roles.



Left: The MR2 came packed with the latest computerised avionics and detector equipment

Below, left: The Nimrod's bomb bay was originally designed for Anti-Submarine Warfare

The open bomb bay of the Nimrod MR2, which was the longest of any NATO aircraft



## DESIGN

Based on the de Havilland Comet Mark 4, the Nimrod MR2 was an extensive modification to the original civilian airliner. In addition to more powerful engines and greater fuel capacity, the entire underside was modified with the addition of a bomb bay to allow the carrying of anti-submarine torpedoes and other diverse payloads.

The civilian interior was completely removed and complex anti-submarine warfare equipment with workstations was installed throughout for the crew of 13. Missions were long, especially after the retrofitting of air-to-air refuelling, so the original airliner's galley and toilet facilities were retained.

Radar systems in the nose, together with wing-tip pods for sensors and additional equipment on the tail and at the top of the rudder changed the shape of the Comet airframe significantly. All of the aircraft were not new-built, but were, in fact, converted from existing airliner airframes obtained by Hawker Siddeley to fulfil the contract.

Air-to-air refuelling capability was added within a matter of weeks at the beginning of the Falklands conflict, an aircraft undertaking a 20-hour flight as a test of the system. Additional equipment for this also included Sidewinder air-to-air missiles under the wings. As the Nimrod was operating close to Argentina, but with friendly fighter cover many miles away, this was the only self-defence capability it had.

**“THE ENTIRE UNDERSIDE WAS MODIFIED WITH THE ADDITION OF A BOMB BAY TO ALLOW THE CARRYING OF ANTI-SUBMARINE TORPEDOES”**

The plane's two outboard engines could be turned off during long patrols to conserve energy



## ENGINES

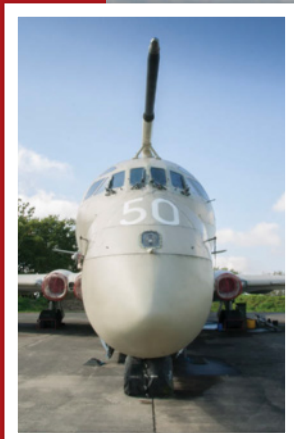
The Nimrod MR2 is powered by four Rolls-Royce Spey turbojet engines. To maximise range and endurance on patrol, the aircraft was designed to allow the two outboard engines to be shut down in flight. Heavy-duty hydraulic systems and enhanced electricity generation capability from the two inner engines were able to supply the considerable demand required to power the complex monitoring systems on board. Rolls-Royce Spey engines were also used to power the Blackburn Buccaneer and the British variants of the McDonnell Douglas Phantom.

## ROLE AND DIVERSITY

Originally designed to replace the piston-engine Avro Shackleton in anti-submarine warfare, the Nimrod served in a variety of other roles. Its long endurance and stand-off surveillance capability, coupled with a diverse range of payload options, led to it being much in demand throughout its entire history, right up to the final days before retirement.

The Nimrod home base was RAF Kinloss, but the nature of operations meant that crews were often positioned globally to detect threats, from Chile in South America to Malta, Japan, Australia and North America. During the Falklands conflict, Nimrod MR2s guarded the waters and airspace around Ascension Island before overseeing defence of the Royal Navy fleet as it sailed to the South Atlantic. The aircraft also provided support for the famous Vulcan Black Buck raid on Port Stanley airport. The rescue operations of the Piper Alpha oil rig disaster in the North Sea were co-ordinated by Nimrod crews overhead the incident, as rescue teams tried to save those trapped aboard the blazing rig.

In the new millennium, Nimrod crews saw service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite the land-locked nature of the country, Afghanistan was perhaps one of the most important theatres that Nimrods flew in, directing support to ground troops as well as undertaking special forces operations with the SAS, flying all the way from Kinloss in Scotland with British army personnel aboard to co-ordinate attacks.



The Magnetic Anomaly Detector in the tail boom was intended primarily for submarine detection

Left: The Nimrod's most unique feature is its protruding radar system

**“ITS LONG ENDURANCE AND STAND-OFF SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY, COUPLED WITH A DIVERSE RANGE OF PAYLOAD OPTIONS, LED TO IT BEING MUCH IN DEMAND THROUGHOUT IT’S ENTIRE HISTORY”**

A crew of roughly 13 personnel, including three flight crew, operated within the MR2



## COCKPIT

The Nimrod had a flight crew of three, with the first pilot and aircraft commander on the left and co-pilot on the right. Basic flight instruments were in front of each pilot, with engine controls in the centre quadrant. Radios for communication with military and civilian air traffic were housed overhead. Behind them to the right was a flight engineer. He was responsible for monitoring all the aircraft's systems, from basic engine parameters to fuel consumption, electricity generation for all of the electronics and hydraulic power for controlling the aircraft. He was also responsible for the inbound flow of fuel during in-flight refuelling.

*Left: The view from within the Nimrod MR2's cockpit*

**“THEY ALSO HAD THE CAPABILITY TO ‘SMELL’ DIESEL EXHAUST GASSES FROM SOME CONVENTIONAL SUBMARINES THOUGH THIS WAS OF NO VALUE AGAINST NUCLEAR SUBS”**



## AVIONICS AND CREW AREA

The Nimrod operated with a crew of about 13, though for specific roles additional personnel could be carried – up to as many as 24. In addition to the two pilots and flight engineer, the main crew roles were the operation of the surveillance radar and electronic sensors for detecting threats. Nimrods had two navigators, one for routine guidance and another tactical navigator, who co-ordinated information from a four-man team of weapons and electronic warfare experts.

The radar operator was part of that four-man tactical team. He operated the Searchwater radar system, which had a range of 200 miles and was capable of measuring target length as well as tracking multiple targets and interrogating for Friend or Foe signals. This information was then sent to the tactical navigator's display, who was responsible for co-ordinating the operation and directing other aircraft or assets to a target. The tactical navigator could control the aircraft flight systems and autopilot, giving them almost complete control over the aircraft from that position.

Electronic surveillance was undertaken by the ESM operator. Yellowgate ESM systems in the wing-tip pods were able to detect incoming radar signals from enemy positions and triangulate a bearing and range based solely on the strength of the signal.

The rear of the aircraft carried sonobuoys that were deployed vertically by the crew into the sea. These systems were generally deployed in a ring around a suspected submarine's position and then used sonar to locate it. They also had the capability to 'smell' diesel exhaust gasses from some conventional submarines, though this was of no value against nuclear subs.

The Magnetic Anomaly Detector positioned in the tail boom was a very sensitive magnetic detector. It was able to detect disturbances in the Earth's magnetic field caused by the passage of a submarine and triangulate readings to provide a fix. Two dome windows, one each side of the fuselage, were dedicated to visual observations and were generally used for photographing shipping and other targets of interest. These positions were also used for search-and-rescue operations, with the ability to deploy a life raft by hand if needed from the adjacent over-wing hatch.

**Below:** The majority of the on-board crew were dedicated to electronic surveillance and radar operations  
**Below, right:** The MR2 had the longest bomb bay of any NATO aircraft



## ARMAMENT

The huge bomb bay of the Nimrod could deliver a variety of weapons. In an anti-submarine role, it carried Sting Ray torpedoes and Harpoon air-launched missiles, while the same area could also carry as many as 150 sonobuoys deployed to the surface to detect submarines. Rescue capabilities involved carrying rescue dinghies. Though not often in direct conflict with other threats, the Nimrod could carry air-to-air missiles under the wings for self defence.

**“THOUGH NOT OFTEN IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH OTHER THREATS, THE NIMROD COULD CARRY AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES UNDER THE WINGS FOR SELF DEFENCE”**

**A Royal Navy training torpedo parachutes to safety from a Merlin helicopter**



**The huge bomb bay of the Nimrod was most-often used for non-lethal purposes**

# South China Sea

With a superpower on the march and building artificial islands, the stakes behind Asia's most complicated maritime dispute are higher than ever

WORDS MIGUEL MIRANDA

Romance has long eluded the body of water called the South China Sea. Its endless cobalt waves and occasional remote atolls don't lend themselves well to postcards. Even its two salient geographic features, the mini-archipelagos of the Paracel and Spratly Islands, are ill-suited for tourism.

But the South China Sea, stretching from the Malacca Strait to Taiwan's coastline, is vital. Buried in its undersea surface is an estimated 190 trillion cubic metres of untapped natural gas and 11 billion barrels of oil. The coral reefs along its periphery have succoured fisher folk from a dozen nations for centuries. It is the gateway to the techno-industrial metropolises of southern China and a major conduit for East Asia's fibre-optic cables connecting financial markets in Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tokyo.

At least half the world's commodity exports travel in shipping containers aboard the freighters plying this sea's waves. Despite its value to the global economy, whose cornerstone is now in Asia, the South China Sea never commanded the same importance as, for example, the Mediterranean or the Horn of Africa did. Until now, that is.

In nine isolated locations far outside China's own maritime borders, more than 1,000 kilometres away from Hainan Island and just an hour's flight from either Philippine or Malaysian airspace, Chinese workers are racing to build enormous facilities for permanent bases. The latest satellite imagery reveals at least two would-be runways emerging from the Fiery Cross and Mischief reefs in the Spratly Islands. A little more than a year ago,

these locations were just specks on a dull map. What appears to be under way is a huge investment in facilities that will house Chinese personnel. If each of the seven bases serves this purpose, then the Chinese Coast Guard and the People's Liberation Army Navy and Air Force (PLAN/AF) can exercise de facto control over the Spratlys. Meanwhile, PLAN and PLAAF assets can travel unmolested to and from the mainland. This new status quo represents a direct threat to the sovereignty of at least five countries: Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan. It could also compel a US naval presence that would hinder trade and stretch tensions even further.

Worse, it's the perfect setup for a shooting war, with real casualties and catastrophic destruction. Luckily, this is not yet the case. The problem with the South China Sea today is, for lack of a better description, a tangled mess compounded by bad faith and reflexive distrust among the countries involved.

The historical record is clear, however: it wasn't until the late 19th century that China exercised claims over the Paracel Islands and its Southern Seas. No single state or foreign power possessed complete jurisdiction over the domain until the latter half of the 20th century, albeit in limited spaces. China's insistence on control over the area is a strategic necessity alongside its rise as a naval power.

## Dashes of outrage

If the history books were to judge, the dastardly culprit who ignited the current-day dispute in the South China Sea is the unlikeliest of villains: France.

## THE FIGHT TO CONTROL THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

**1858**

Spurred by commercial and religious sentiments, Napoleon III orders his ships to attack Da Nang. Four years later, Vietnam's Emperor Tru Duc would concede to French demands for ports.

**1887**

For the sake of avoiding unnecessary conflict over maritime borders, France and China agree to uphold the Convention On The Delimitation Of The Border Between China And Tonkin.

**1910**

In 1909, the Chinese published a map that identified the mysterious Paracel Islands as its territory. The following year, the Qing Dynasty attempts to garrison troops there.



The Chinese navy's missile destroyer DDG-112 Harbin fires a shell during a joint Russia-China naval exercise



**“IF THE HISTORICAL RECORD WERE TO JUDGE, THE DASTARDLY  
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CHINA SEA IS THE UNLIKELIEST OF VILLAINS: FRANCE”**



France was a latecomer in the mad dash to carve up Southeast Asia. By the time it was piecing together its prized Indochina by force of arms from 1858-85, the Dutch were long content with their grip on Java and its natural resources. Likewise were the British with their outposts in Singapore, Malaya and Borneo – not to mention thriving ports in Hong Kong and Shanghai. Another potential rival, Spain, was preoccupied with the decline of its administration over the Philippine Islands.

The draw of European powers to Southeast Asia in the first place deserves mention. The Spice Islands, with their bounties of clove and assorted organic condiments, drew the Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese to uncharted waters in the 16th century (the Spice Islands today belong to Indonesia). 300 years later, and colonial Southeast Asia was a garden of raw materials and cheap oil.

By the time the French had established control over what is present-day Vietnam, covetous eyes were turned towards its adjacent waters. Of course, since geography best represents strategic value, a scattering of reefs and atolls called the Parcel Islands needed to be annexed.

Unfortunately, few records survive of French imperialism in the South China Sea. Names and dates are lost to history, but matters took a turn for the worse on 26 July 1933. This was when the French colonial administration claimed the faraway Spratly Islands in their entirety on the pretext of mining phosphates from guano, or bird faeces deposits. This justification echoes an older claim by British mariners, made in 1877, that guano was found in abundance across the Spratlys.

France's persistence in expanding its dominion over the South China Sea vexed the Republic of China, the regime that emerged after the 1911 revolution that overthrew the Qing Dynasty. Chinese intellectuals at the time were hypersensitive to their country's vulnerability to Western and Japanese imperialism, and in 1936, a zealous geographer named Bai Meichu imposed an "11-dash line" starting from the tip of Guanxi Province, down towards the Borneo coast, running almost parallel to the island of Luzon, and touching the rump of Japanese-occupied Formosa.

This bold claim over a whole body of water was the first time China's sovereignty extended outside Hainan. But it was only in effect on paper – little did Bai know that his innovation would cause shockwaves in Southeast Asia almost 80 years later.

For reasons that have been lost to history, the 11-dash line was revised and became a 9-dash line instead. It meant China's sovereignty began off Hainan and extended all the way down to the waters of the Malaysian Federation and terminated at its arch nemesis Taiwan's eastern shore.

## "THE JAPANESE ALSO INFLUENCED THE COURSE OF THE PROBLEM THANKS TO THEIR CONDUCT IN WORLD WAR II"

### Blood on the Paracels

An obscure record of French encroachment and Bai Meichu's patriotism set the unofficial rules that would muddle the South China Sea question for decades to come. The Japanese also influenced the course of the problem thanks to their conduct in World War II. As early as then, the value of the South China Sea depended on who controlled it and only a modern navy could impose itself across its vast expanse.

Even before 1941, the British and the French were already suspicious of Japanese activities in the area. On 3 July 1938, France even garrisoned an outpost in the Parcel Islands, with Vietnamese conscripts hoping to deter the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN).

This had little effect on the IJN's activities, and a submarine base was eventually built in Hainan and an air strip on the remote islet of Itu Aba. Japan's overall war effort never benefited from these investments, but they did set a dangerous precedent. Future claimants of South China Sea sovereignty now had to lay down real foundations rather than just draw lines on maps.

The first great clash happened in the Parcel Islands. In reality a collection of atolls first recognised by the Chinese Qing-era administration in 1909, the Paracels became Chinese territory for their closeness to Hainan. By 1974, the Republic of Vietnam was still enforcing the original French claim on the Paracels and surrounding waters as Vietnamese territory, albeit with a grudging acknowledgement of China's presence there too.

It helped that US advisers and firepower, and ships operated by the Republic of Vietnam Navy, afforded leverage against the fledgling PLAN's patrol boats. But on 16 January, Chinese soldiers were discovered on Drummond Island. A small battle was fought involving Vietnamese special forces – Navy SEALs patterned after their American counterparts – and PLAN marine infantry.

Credible details of this incident are scarce. It was certainly an interesting clash, with US tactics and weaponry pitted against Maoist doctrine on a remote island with no witnesses. The rising crescendo of the Vietnam War overshadowed the skirmish and the US Navy had no specific mandate to justify intervening. A naval battle also occurred between four South Vietnamese warships and PLAN vessels, reportedly numbering six, near Duncan Island.

Marine patrol staff members prepare to conduct a coast guard mission in the South China Sea



Chinese military planes take part in a rehearsal for V-Day celebrations over Beijing



#### 1936

Beginning in 1933, Republic of China cartographers draw up new borders for Chinese maps. This may have been in response to French aggression and inspires Bai Meichu's 11-dash line claim.

#### 1939

To discourage French ambitions over the Spratly Islands, Japan renames the entire area Shinnan Shoto and builds an airstrip on Itu Aba. This new territory is made a protectorate governed from Formosa.

#### 1949

The PLA finally defeat Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists after four years of relentless combat. Chiang and the remnants of his government retreat to Formosa and establish the "rogue province" Taiwan.

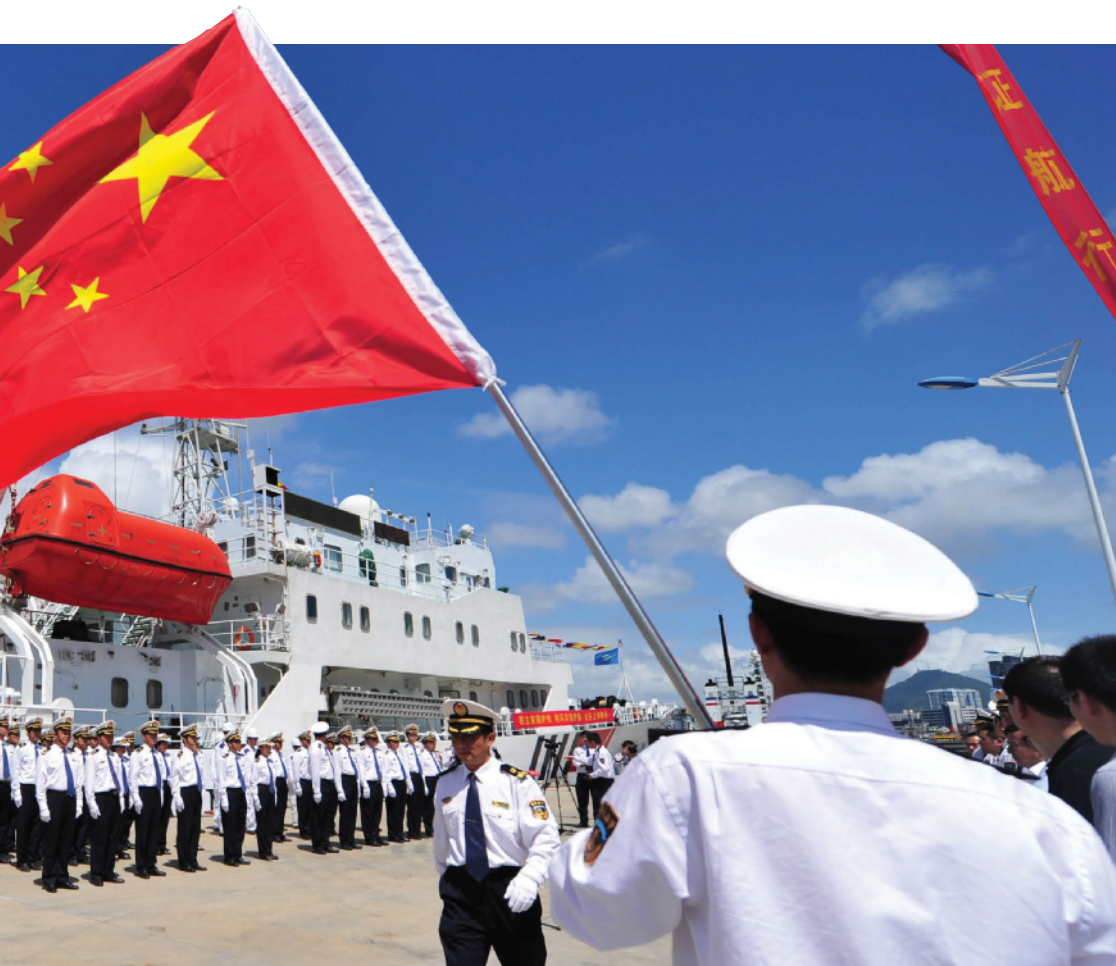
#### 1956

The Filipino mariner Tomas Cloma claims several islands in the Spratlys. A stickler for formalities, he informs the United Nations, the Philippine government and neighbouring countries of his actions.

#### 1974

South Vietnam asserts its historic right over the Parcel Islands. China disagrees and sends in troops and patrol boats. A week-long battle ends with a Chinese victory and a humbled South Vietnam.





This was the nastiest fight on record over the Paracels, and a South Vietnamese vessel was sunk. Another South Vietnamese escort ship was heavily damaged. Chinese casualties were said to number 18 but the official figures have never been revealed. The Vietnamese reportedly lost between 50 and 100 men.

The outcome of the Paracels crisis further weakened the South Vietnamese government, which was already struggling to contain the resurgent North Vietnamese Army (NVA). The Paracel Islands became part of China and South Vietnam crumbled within a year.

On 17 February 1979, deteriorating relations between Vietnam and Communist China led to a full-blown invasion after the Vietnam People's Army overthrew the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. PLA infantry divisions streamed across the border and ravaged Vietnam's northern provinces but later met stiff resistance. The Sino-Vietnamese War ended within a month, but fighting continued on and off until 1990.

### Freedomland

Arguably the most colourful episode in the scramble for the South China Sea was how the Philippines became embroiled in the dispute over the Spratly Islands. In a series of unfortunate events that didn't involve the Philippine government, a considerable swathe of water, sand and coral along the north-eastern Spratlys were added to national territory during the 1950s. This was a result of Tomas Cloma's brave attempt at founding a nation for himself.

Cloma was a Filipino businessman and mariner who, for ambiguous reasons, staked a claim over an islet in the Spratlys and declared the surrounding area a sovereign republic. On 11 May 1956, he inaugurated his new country Freedomland, triggering a diplomatic row. A month later, Taiwan sent troops to the deserted Itu Aba, the former Japanese garrison. They occupied it, repaired its airstrip and renamed this possession Taiping. Was this meant to counter the rise of Cloma's Freedomland, or deter the People's Republic of China (PRC) from encroaching on the Spratlys?

Whatever the reason, Freedomland never flourished and Cloma abandoned his claim on his fictitious country when he was arrested in 1974. He formally relinquished it to the Philippine government for one peso, which was a little less than an American dollar. 22 years after the faux independence of Freedomland, the Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Decree 1596, converting it into a municipality called the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG). It was an ironic choice for a name since Kalayaan is the Filipino word for freedom. The Philippine Navy soon established a small outpost and an airstrip for propeller-driven aircraft to patrol the surrounding waters.



China's first aircraft carrier Liaoning sailed the South China Sea under escort in 2013

### 1978

The Philippines annexes Cloma's 'Free Territory of Freedomland' and sends ships and troops to secure the newly minted Kalayaan Island Group's 64,000 square miles. An air strip and a hamlet are built on Thitu Island.



### 1979

A 120,000-strong PLA invasion force blitzes the border with Vietnam. This marks a new low in relations between the two countries, and when hostilities end, both Vietnam and China claim victory.

### 1988

Without warning, China launches an invasion of the Spratly Islands. What began as a standoff ends in bloodshed as PLAN frigates fire on the Vietnamese defending Johnson South.

### 1995

China earns the ire of the Philippines after it erects a small platform on Mischief Reef. Both countries skirmish on several occasions, sometimes with live ammo, but avoid a battle.

Like the Philippines, Malaysia helped itself to its own slice of the Spratly Islands during the late 1970s. A special economic zone was created and between 1983 and 1986; six features – sand banks and coral reefs – were occupied. An airstrip was paved on the islet of Swallow Reef for delivering supplies.

The brazen actions of Southeast Asian countries in the Spratlys never erupted into war because these petty claims were made on insignificant geographic features. More importantly, there are no energy reserves under the Spratlys. Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and even Brunei had managed to exploit underwater gas fields within their own borders. Then, as now, the Spratlys are only strategic frontier regions for navies and air forces to project control.

Vietnam was the most aggressive when claiming its portion of the Spratlys that were once coveted by its French colonial masters. From 1975-95, Vietnam occupied at least 27 features within the Spratlys and maintained an airstrip on Spratly Island itself. Vietnam's illusions were shattered in 1988 when the PLAN arrived in force.

Almost four decades had passed since the Communists took over China, and in all that time it never bothered imposing itself on the Spratly Islands. Then, 14 years after the battle of the Paracel Islands, a Chinese flotilla arrived in Fiery Cross Reef. A small outpost was constructed and Chinese troops were deployed in four other locations. In March 1988, three PLAN frigates intercepted a Vietnamese convoy heading to the Johnson South Reef north east of Fiery Cross.

Two Vietnamese LSTs, leftovers from the American war, were sunk by PLAN gunnery. An estimated 400 Vietnamese were killed while only a single Chinese sailor perished.

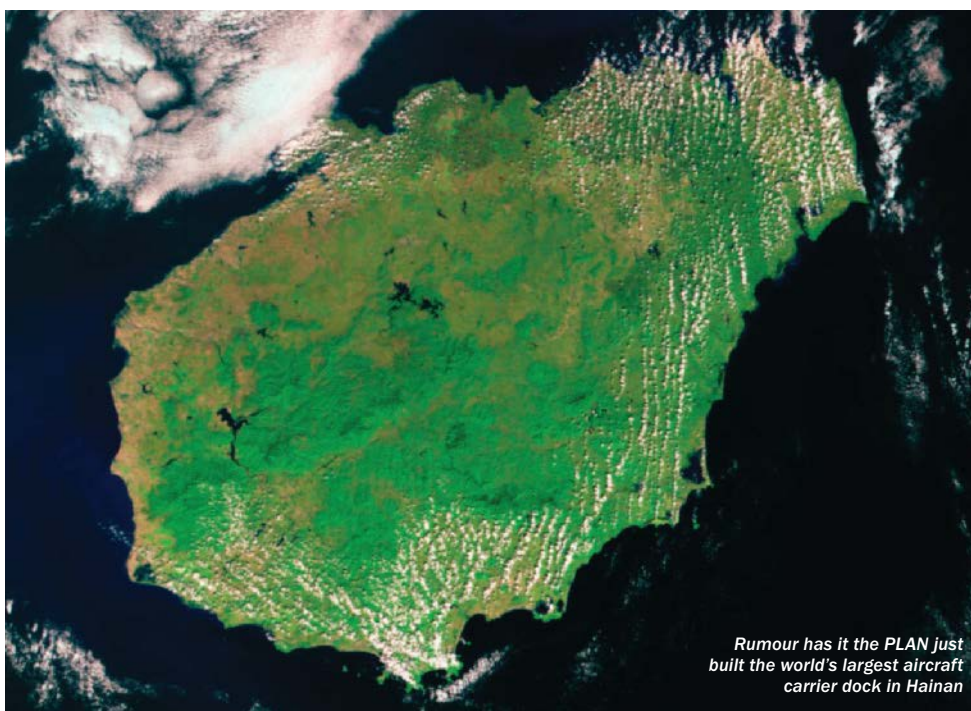
### The superpower gambit

During the battle, two of the three PLAN ships were identified as obsolete vessels compared to the newer warships deployed by the PLAN today, but in 1988 they were more than a

**“DOZENS OF VIETNAMESE ON THE CORALS WERE BLOWN TO PIECES WITHIN SECONDS AND THE SURROUNDING REEF ECHOED WITH THE JACKHAMMER CADENCE FROM THE CHINESE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS”**



A PLA Marine Corps amphibious assault vehicle



Rumour has it the PLAN just built the world's largest aircraft carrier dock in Hainan

**2001**

A US Navy EP-3 surveillance plane is forced to land on Hainan after one of its engines is destroyed in a freak accident when a PLAAF J-8 collides with its propeller.

**2013**

China's National People's Congress (NPC) approves the creation of a single unified Coast Guard Bureau. The new organisation is recognised as the largest maritime law enforcement fleet in Asia.



**2014**

A combination of satellite and aerial imagery reveals extensive dredging on nine locations in the Spratly Islands. China's Foreign Ministry insists the work is peaceful and accuses neighbouring countries of aggression.



**2015**

Work proceeds uninterrupted among China's claims in the Spratly Islands. The US Navy's presence increases to monitor the development. China's structures are expected to be fully operational by 2017.

Right: Chinese sailors aboard the destroyer Qingdao (DDG 113)



with 100mm shells and reduced both to twisted metal, quickly vanishing under the waterline. In the resulting diplomatic row, the Vietnamese claimed that between 64 and 80 of their sailors were lost. The Chinese media reported hundreds killed, with none from the PLAN. The resulting bad blood has never gone away.

In May 2014, the oil rig Haiyang Shiyou 981 was deployed south of Triton Island in the Paracels. Just 200 nautical miles away from the port city of Da Nang, attempts by the Vietnamese coast guard to disrupt the rig's operation were frustrated when Chinese trawlers arrived and tried ramming them. The rig operated by the China National Offshore Oil Corporation was removed a week later.

On 20 May 2015, a US Navy P-8A Poseidon surveillance plane was warned over the radio to withdraw from Chinese airspace as it patrolled the Spratlys. In its *Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy 2015*, the Pentagon acknowledges China's superiority over its weak neighbours. With its financial clout and maritime assets, it can overcompensate and build an entire network of fortresses – and defend them – from within Beijing's 9-dash line claim.

China's efforts in the region aren't about resources. Like the British, the French and the Japanese before them, China's naval strength and economic power compels it to dominate nearby sea lanes. Doing so allows for manoeuvring room and force projection toward China's "near abroad." If it succeeds, a new political order will descend on Southeast Asia.

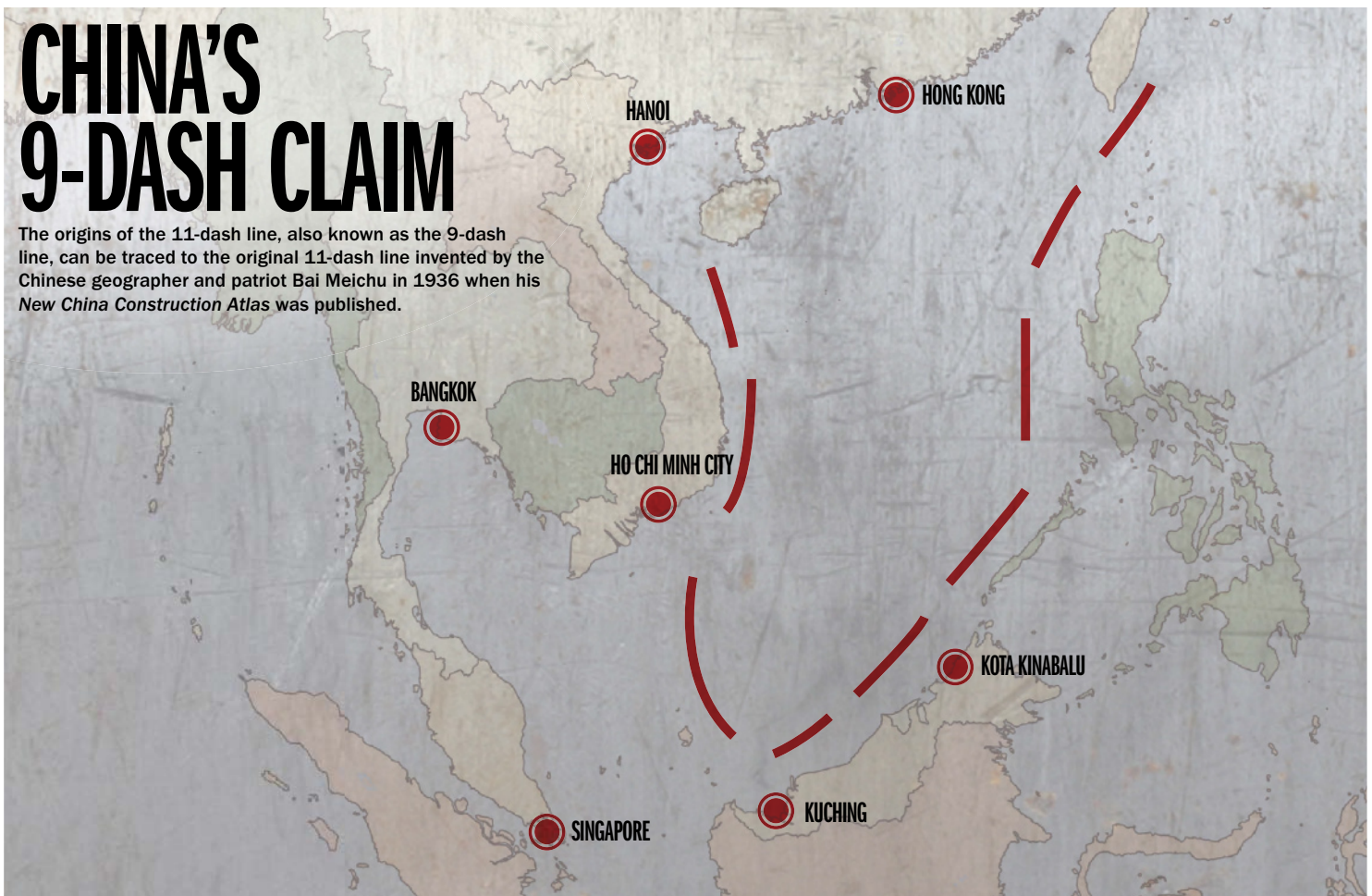
match for the unprepared Vietnamese, who were only trying to discourage the PLAN's encroachment on the Johnson South Reef.

The reef itself was shallow enough for marines and sailors to wade in and stand on the rocks. On 14 March, PLAN frigates warned the Vietnamese on the reef to withdraw and take their flag with them. The Vietnamese refused and were met with volleys from the frigates' twin-barrel 37mm anti-aircraft guns.

The rounds split the air and created small geysers as they smashed through the water. Dozens of Vietnamese on the corals were blown to pieces within seconds and the surrounding reef echoed with the jackhammer cadence from the Chinese anti-aircraft guns. The frigates next targeted the two nearby LSTs

# CHINA'S 9-DASH CLAIM

The origins of the 11-dash line, also known as the 9-dash line, can be traced to the original 11-dash line invented by the Chinese geographer and patriot Bai Meichu in 1936 when his *New China Construction Atlas* was published.



Images: FreeVectorMaps.com, Rex Features



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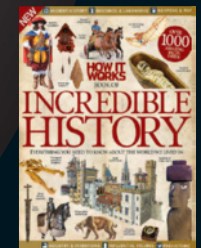
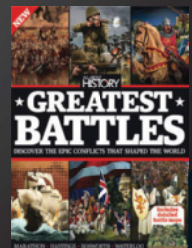
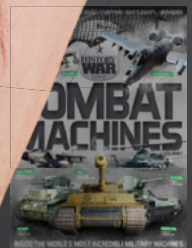
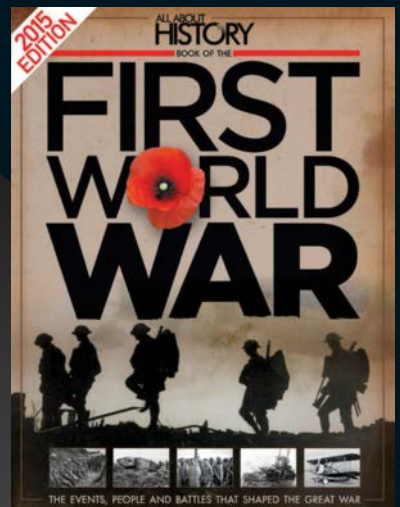
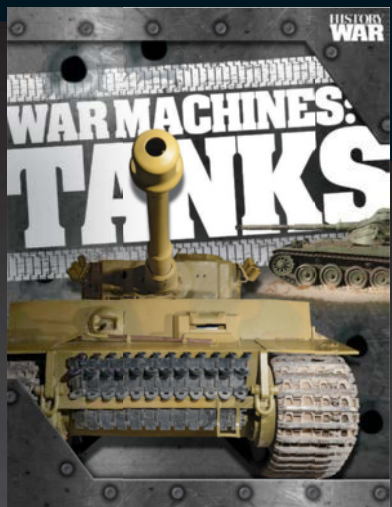


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EDITOR'S PICK



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John Browning tests out a Colt  
M1895 machine gun

**“DURING A CAREER SPANNING 64 YEARS,  
BROWNING WAS GRANTED 128 PATENTS FOR  
HIS DESIGNS AND CREATED SOME OF THE MOST  
IMPORTANT AND ICONIC FIREARMS IN HISTORY”**

# The Gunfather

WORDS MATTHEW MOSS

John Moses Browning was undoubtedly the USA's greatest gun designer, a genius whose iconic designs influenced all that followed

The USA's most gifted firearms designer was born in Utah in January 1855. The son of the talented gunsmith Jonathan Browning, John Moses Browning was one of 24 children born into a large Mormon family. Aged seven, he began working in his father's gun shop repairing broken guns, building his first weapon at 13. When his father died in 1879, he continued to work with guns and was granted his first patent in October the same year, aged just 24. During a career spanning 64 years, Browning was granted 128 patents for his designs and created some of the most important and iconic in firearms in history.



Right: US troops sight their Browning M1919 at an enemy position during the Korean War

After inheriting his father's shop, Browning began production of his first rifle, a single-shot hunting rifle that he sold for \$25, selling 25 in his first week of production. This simple rifle became popular locally, and in 1883, the Winchester Repeating Arms Company purchased one for evaluation. Winchester were impressed and sent their general manager, TG Bennett, to meet Browning. Bennett bought the production rights to Browning's rifle and a 19-year partnership began.

Over the next decade, Browning developed a series of lever-action hunting rifles, including the iconic Model 1894, simple sporting rifles and the world's first lever-action shotgun: the Model 1887. Before the turn of the century, he patented the M1897 pump-action shotgun, which would become famous for its firepower during World War I, and a number of his first pistol designs.

In 1887, seemingly at the height of his powers, John Browning stopped designing guns. As a Mormon he was obliged to spend two years as a missionary, and in March 1887, at the age of 32, he began to travel and preach in the USA's southern states. In 1889, he returned to his work and by 1891, Browning had been issued 20 patents in just three years, making up for his time as a missionary.

Browning's automatic pistol, rifle and machine-gun ideas all stemmed from one incident in 1889. While out shooting with friends, he noticed how nearby vegetation was moved by gases leaving the muzzle of a friend's rifle. This revelation led him to attempt to capture the wasted energy to cycle his guns. At the age of 34, Browning's revelation would change the world of gun design forever and lead to some of his most brilliant creations.

Harnessing the power of gases created by the firing of a cartridge, he was able to develop a series of semi-automatic pistols, including the Colt Pocket Hammerless 1903 and the legendary Colt 1911; shotguns including the revolutionary Auto-5; and rifles such as the Remington Model 8 and the Browning Automatic Rifle.

Perhaps the most important series of guns to come from this revelation were his machine guns. The first of his 'automatic' guns to be developed was a weapon that would eventually become the Colt-Browning M1895. This was famously nicknamed the potato digger, because when it was set up too close to the ground the reciprocating arm that cycled the weapon was powerful enough to throw up clumps of earth.

The Colt-Browning M1895 was the first of Browning's designs to be adopted for military service and was used during the Spanish-American War in 1898. While the M1895

**"AT THE AGE OF 34, BROWNING'S REVELATION WOULD CHANGE THE WORLD OF GUN DESIGN FOREVER AND LEAD TO SOME OF HIS MOST BRILLIANT CREATIONS"**

# THE M1919A4

**5 MILLION M1919A4 BROWNING'S SERVED THE US ARMY THROUGH WORLD WAR II, KOREA AND VIETNAM**

### RECOIL OPERATED SYSTEM

The M1919 used the energy of the ammunition's gases to push the bolt back and cock and load the next round.

REAR FOLDING SIGHT

TRIGGER

### TWO-MAN TEAM

The gun was reliable and simple to use, needing just two men to operate it - one to fire and one to load.

RECEIVER

### PISTOL GRIP

Unlike other machine guns, but like the British Vickers gun that had a pair of spade grips, the M1919 had a pistol grip.

TRAVERSE AND ELEVATING MECHANISM



# BROWNING

Developed from Browning's water-cooled M1917 after World War I as a lightweight medium machine gun, the M1919A4 became The USA's workhorse, being mounted on tanks, ships, jeeps, landing craft, fighter planes and lugged into battle in every theatre of World War II by US troops.



**ACTION:** RECOIL OPERATED  
**CALIBRE:** .30-06  
**FEED SYSTEM:** 250-ROUND BELT  
**BUILT:** 1919-45  
**LENGTH:** 141CM  
**WEIGHT:** 14KG

*Above: Although the M1919A4 had a slower rate of fire than the M1917 models, its lighter weight made it an ideal infantry weapon*

Illustrations: Alex Pang

**AIR-COOLED**

The M1919A4 had a heavy barrel enclosed in a perforated casing, which allowed heat from sustained firing to dissipate.

**SUSTAINED FIRE**

The M1919A4 fired at a steady rate of 500 rounds per minute, much slower but a lot more controllable than the German MG 42.

**FRONT SIGHT**

**BELT-FED**

Like Browning's earlier machine guns, the M1919 fed from simple a 250-round cloth belt.

**MOUNTING PINTLE**

**LIGHTWEIGHT TRIPOD**

The M1919's new M2 tripod weighed just 14lb (6.4kg) compared to the M1917's, which weighed 53lb (24kg).

**.30-CALIBRE FIREPOWER**

The M1919 fired the US Army's standard rifle round, the .30-06. Belts normally had a tracer cartridge every four rounds to help the operator see where his fire was hitting.



*Right: The M1919A4 Browning is one of the world's most prolific machine-guns*

was not the first machine gun – that honour fell to the Maxim – Browning’s weapon was the first in a series of .30-calibre machine guns that would become iconic symbols of American military might, seeing service during both world wars as well as Korea and Vietnam.

Between 1883 and 1900, Browning sold 44 different gun designs to Winchester, only a quarter of which were manufactured and marketed – the rest were simply bought to ensure no other rival gun manufacturer could. Winchester maintained the monopoly over Browning’s inventions for 19 years and paid him handsomely. But in 1900, the relationship broke down when Browning demanded royalties, rather than just the single large payment they had previously agreed upon, for his new semi-automatic shotgun: the Auto-5.

Dismayed, Browning took his new shotgun to Winchester’s rival the Remington Arms Company, but in a strange twist of fate, as Browning sat waiting to offer them the gun, Remington’s president died of a heart attack. Instead, Browning took the Auto-5 to his European contacts and the shotgun was manufactured by Fabrique Nationale (FN) in Belgium.

While Winchester held the monopoly on Browning’s rifle designs, Browning’s pistols were produced by two other companies. In 1896, he took his revolutionary pistol designs to Colt in the US and FN in Europe. His semi-automatic pistols became extremely popular with civilians and the military on both sides of the Atlantic. One of Browning’s pistols, an FN M1910, would later be used



## Colt 1911

**FIRING THE HARD HITTING .45ACP, THE COLT 1911 WAS THE US ARMY’S SIDE ARM FOR MORE THAN 70 YEARS**

With more than 5 million made, Browning’s Colt 1911 is undoubtedly his most iconic design. Used by the militaries of 30 countries and still in service more than 100 years after it was first developed. The early 1900s saw the US Army search for a modern sidearm to replace its aging and underpowered revolvers. In a series of trials, John Browning’s revolutionary pistol designs beat competitors including the famous Luger P.08, to be selected as the US military’s new sidearm.

It fired the powerful .45ACP cartridge, specially designed by Browning to provide

the stopping power the military wanted in a semi-automatic pistol. It saw action in conflicts around the world from Haiti, to Mexico, to the trenches of World War I and Africa, the Pacific and Europe during World War II. It was again carried into battle by US troops in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War until it was finally retired in 1990. However, elements of the US Marine Corps still use the 1911, making it one of the longest serving sidearms in military history, far outlasting its contemporary rivals.

**ACTION: SHORT RECOIL OPERATED  
CALIBRE: .45ACP  
MAGAZINE CAPACITY: 7 ROUNDS  
BUILT: 1911-PRESENT  
LENGTH: 21CM WEIGHT: 1.1KG**

to assassinate Archduke Franz Ferdinand and spark the beginning of World War I.

When the USA finally entered the war in 1917, the US Army was chronically under-equipped and desperately needed machine guns. Browning provided two weapons that would serve for more than 50 years. The M1917 water-cooled medium gun was an improvement on Browning’s earlier model – lighter and more reliable. The second gun adopted by the US

Army was the Browning Automatic Rifle M1918 (the BAR), a light machine gun that could be carried and operated by just one man, greatly increasing the infantryman’s firepower.

Browning was undoubtedly a patriotic man, as when negotiating the licensing rights to manufacture these guns for the government, he refused royalties, instead agreeing to a single payment of \$750,000 for his work – all the guns produced during World War I alone would have brought him \$12,704,350 in royalties, saving this money for the war effort. Browning’s M1917 design later evolved into the air-cooled M1919, which quickly became the US military’s workhorse machine gun, mounted on tanks, jeeps, ships, landing craft and aircraft. Along with the BAR, Colt 1911 and the M2 .50-calibre heavy machine gun, Browning was responsible for the bulk of the US military’s arsenal.

**“HIS LEGACY IS NEARLY UNPARALLELED IN FIREARMS DESIGN – HE DESIGNED ALMOST EVERY TYPE OF GUN FROM .22-CALIBRE HUNTING RIFLES TO 37MM CANNONS”**

## Winchester 1892

**PRODUCED FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS, IT BECAME A FRONTIER FAVOURITE AND FOUND FAME IN HUNDREDS OF WESTERNS**

As the 19th century came to an end, ammunition became increasingly powerful, but Winchester’s iconic 1873 lever-action rifle could not withstand the high pressures the new ammunition created. In 1885, Winchester asked Browning if he could design a stronger action that could fire big-game hunting ammunition. Browning designed the 1886, which fired the hard-hitting .45-70 round that hunters wanted. Six years later, Winchester launched the Model 1892. Slightly smaller but using the same tough action, it fired revolutionary new smokeless ammunition and became an instant hit, with more than

**ACTION: LEVER ACTION  
CALIBRE: VARIOUS INCLUDING .44-40 & .38-40  
MAGAZINE CAPACITY: 9-ROUND TUBE MAGAZINE  
BUILT: 1886-1945 LENGTH: 125CM WEIGHT: 4.5KG**

1 million made. Used by ranchers and cowboys, outlaws and lawmen, Browning’s rifles even made it to the North Pole when US Admiral Peary took an 1892 on his expedition in 1908. The rifle was also a favourite of Buffalo Bill and the legendary trick shooter Annie Oakley. In the 1950s, the 1892 found fame on the silver screen as it became the go-to gun for John Wayne and dozens of other movie stars. Its resemblance to the classic Winchester 1873 and its ability to fire blanks made it a favourite with prop departments. More than 8 million of Browning’s lever-action 1886, 1892 and 1894 rifles were made.

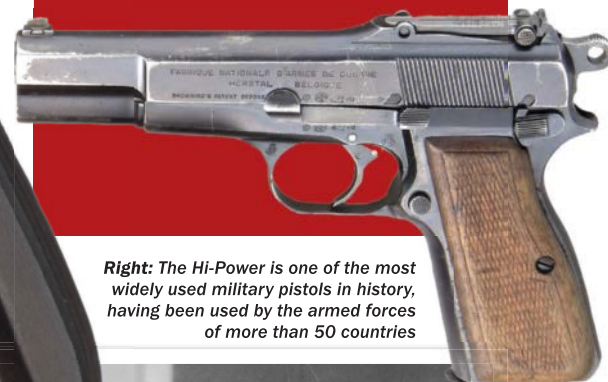


*Right: This iconic handgun was used as a standard-issue side arm in the US military until 1986*

# Armourer of the world

**FOR THE PAST 100 YEARS, MILITARIES AROUND THE WORLD HAVE USED JOHN BROWNING'S RELIABLE, ROBUST AND ICONIC DESIGNS**

The US was not the only country to adopt Browning's guns. Before World War I, his FN pistols were extremely popular throughout Europe with the FN Model 1903 pistol adopted by the Swedish army. During the war, the Russian Empire bought 300,000 Winchester 1895 rifles and 15,000 M1895 machine guns. Between the wars, the BAR was adopted by Belgium, Poland and Sweden. Browning's last pistol design, the Hi-Power, was used by both sides during World War II with Britain, Canada and Germany all issuing it. Following World War II, thousands of Browning's weapons were given to countries as military aid from the US. South Korea, Japan, Belgium, France and dozens of South American countries received BARs and Browning machine guns. The M2 .50-calibre heavy machine gun developed in the 1930s is still in service in dozens of NATO countries.



*Right: The Hi-Power is one of the most widely used military pistols in history, having been used by the armed forces of more than 50 countries*

On 26 November 1926, aged 71, John Browning collapsed and died at FN's factory in Liege. His legacy is nearly unparalleled in firearms design – he designed almost every type of gun from .22-calibre hunting rifles to 37mm cannons. He developed and improved almost every kind of gun from semi-automatic pistols to pump-action shotguns and heavy machine guns. His guns transcended the changing face of the USA, used by cowboys and lawmen on the last frontiers of the West, soldiers and adventurers like the future President Theodore Roosevelt and by the bootleggers, gangsters and G-Men of the Prohibition era.

During his most productive years, Browning patented more firearms designs than all other American gun designers combined. John Browning was instrumental to the evolution of modern firearms and many of his rifles and pistols are still in production almost 90 years after his death.

**“WHEN THE USA FINALLY ENTERED THE WAR IN 1917, THE US ARMY WAS CHRONICALLY UNDER-EQUIPPED AND DESPERATELY NEEDED MACHINE GUNS”**



*Browning inspects one of his BAR light guns at the Winchester Plant*

# BOOK REVIEWS

History of War's pick of the newest military history titles waiting for you on the shelves



## VICTORIA CROSS HEROES OF WORLD WAR ONE

Writer: Robert Hamilton Publisher: Atlantic Price: £40 Released: 2 November 2015

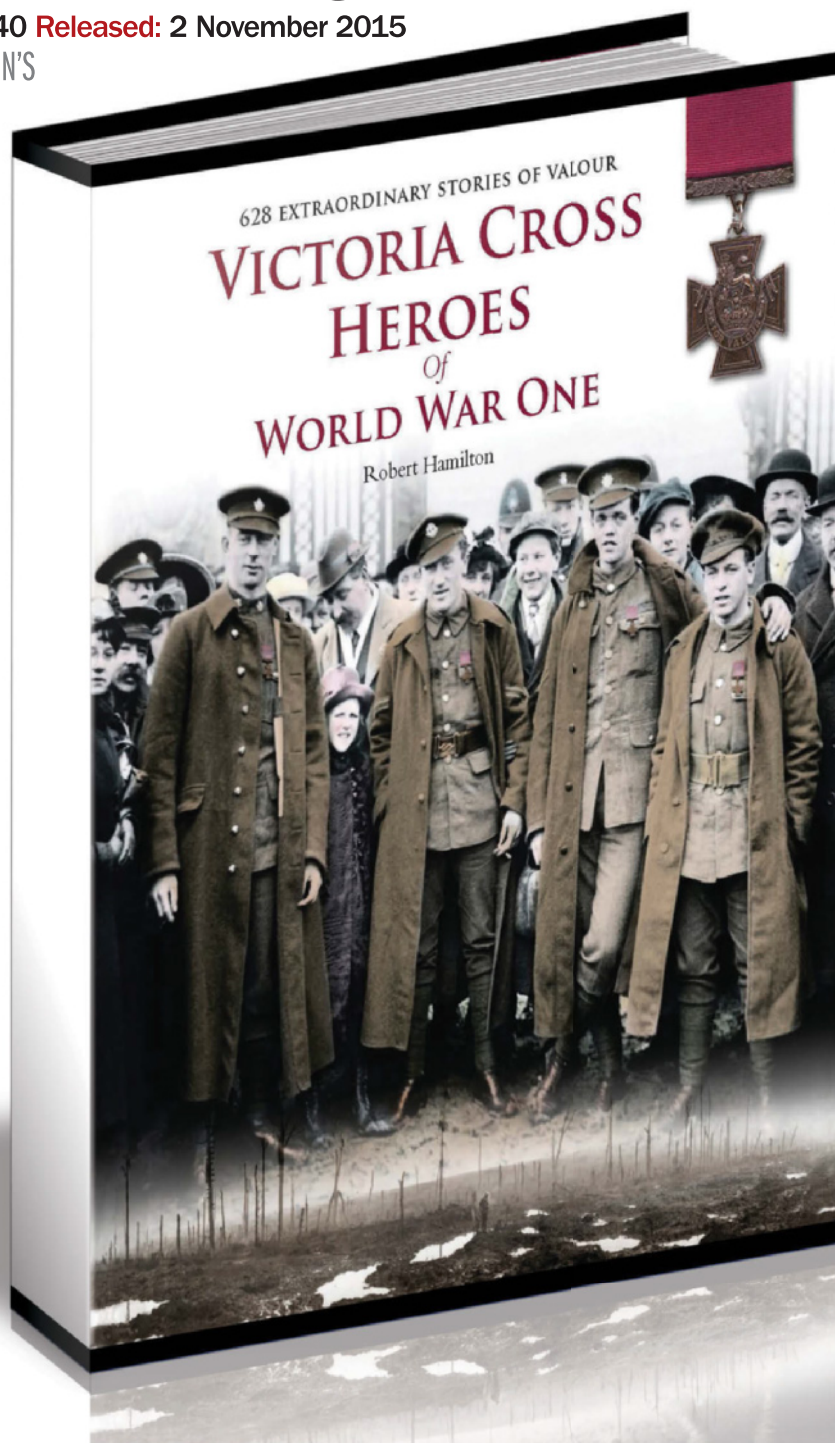
A DEFINITIVE LIST OF THE BRAVE MEN WHO WERE AWARDED BRITAIN'S HIGHEST ACCOLADE IN THE GREAT WAR

The Victoria Cross has an almost legendary aura to it. First forged from Crimean War cannons, the medal joins the Iron Cross and Medal of Honor as one of the most distinguished accolades in war. 628 VCs were awarded during World War I and every single one is documented in Robert Hamilton's excellent book. The VC was the first medal that ensured that it wasn't just the generals who were responsible for great military victories, and by the outbreak of war, it had become the ultimate symbol of courage.

*Victoria Cross Heroes Of World War One* details these brave men from the sand of Gallipoli to the mud of Ypres. The stories encompass every form of heroism, ranging from leaping on grenades to suicidal gauntlet runs. Written in an easy-to-follow chronological order, the book is not just a rundown. Broken down into yearly sections, there is a fair portion of history included as well, with descriptions of each of the four years of war adding context.

The superb stories are accompanied by vivid imagery that ranges from desolate battlefields, war propaganda and, of course, the soldiers themselves. This prevents the book from becoming monotonous, as do the larger descriptions that span a few days rather than just the actual event itself. The book's intended audience may be a little narrow, but all in all, Hamilton's work is a great mix of history and amazing stories. Look out in particular for the excellent account of 'Fulham's Little Corporal' and also the two double-VC winners, who are given their own part in the rundown. The bravery showcased in this book is a joy to read and its 384-page length means that your interest in this work will last you right up to the 100th anniversary of the Somme and beyond.

**“The superb stories are accompanied by vivid imagery that ranges from desolate battlefields, war propaganda and, of course, the soldiers themselves”**



# MAPPING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

**Writer:** Peter Chasseaud **Publisher:** Collins **Price:** £30 **Released:** Out now

A FASCINATING AND ABSORBING MAP-BASED INTERPRETATION OF WORLD WAR II THAT'S NOT AS OFF THE WALL AS IT SOUNDS

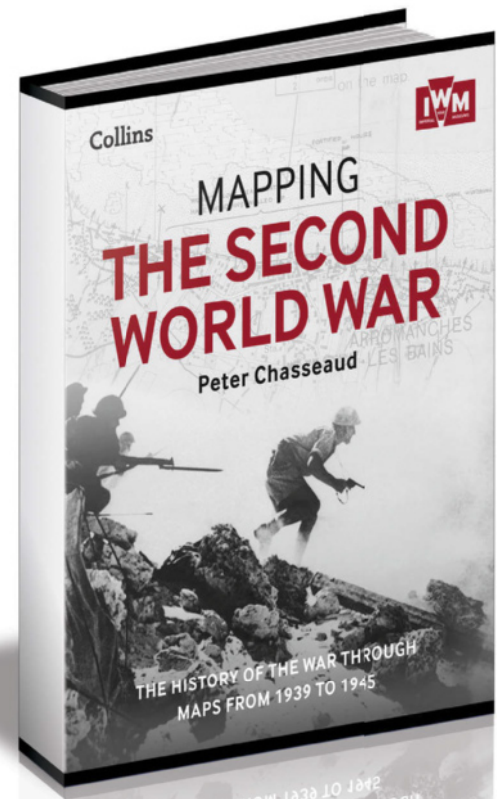
Just when you thought the history of World War II had been covered in every way possible, a book that explores the conflict through maps turns up. At first the idea seems a little gimmicky – geography masquerading as history, perhaps – until you realise the maps are all originals from the conflict.

Drawn from the archives of London's wondrous Imperial War Museum, they chart the evolution of the war in an entirely fresh way. *Mapping The Second World War* starts with a chart showing Nazi Germany's initial thrusts into Poland in 1939 and ends, chillingly, with the US Air Force's target map for the Hiroshima raid almost six years later. In between are more than 150 maps detailing how the war escalated into a full-blown global conflict. Each one – whether it be a strategic planning map, an operations map or one used for propaganda purposes – is a historical artefact, and as such is fascinating and revealing in its own right.

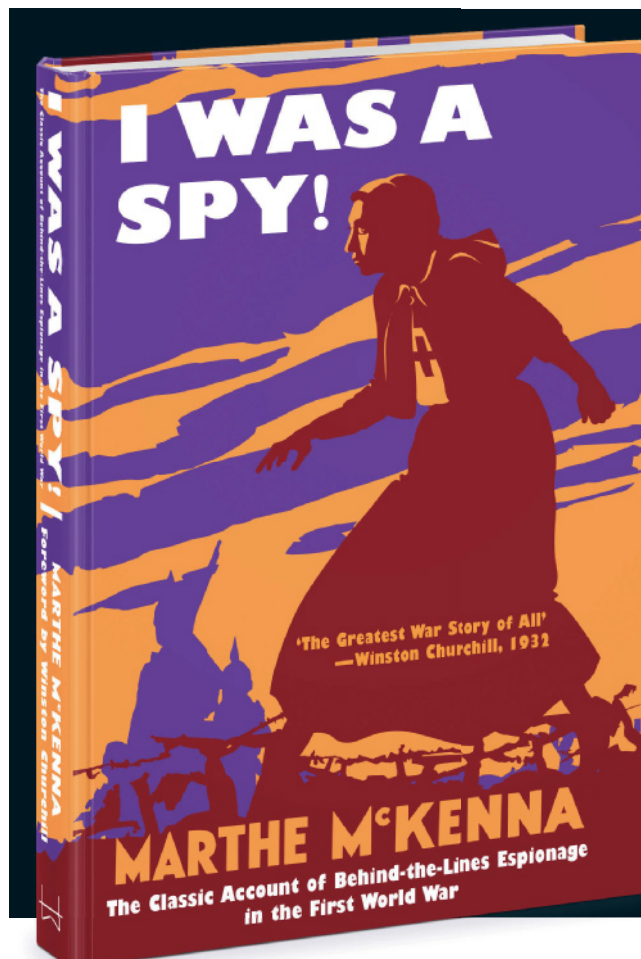
The British operations maps, showing the situation in France in the summer of 1940, are

a great case in point. On the first few, drawn on the eve of the German Blitzkrieg, the battle lines are perfectly drawn, the writing precise, almost as if created for a school project by a particularly eager-to-please pupil. Pretty soon, however, they morph into an almost indecipherable swirl of scrawls and scribbles as the battle lines collapse, and the Allied forces are sent scurrying towards the coast. The chaos of the retreat is captured perfectly in the wild doodlings, and so too is the panic of the anonymous army cartographer who authored them. We've seen plenty of photos of the collapse of France before – monochrome images of refugee-choked roads, torched convoys and troops terrorised by Stukas – but these maps, almost like abstract works of art, provide a connection that's far more intimate and powerful.

That's what makes this book essential. Yes, it's a highly readable account of the war, but it is its unique premise that makes this such an intriguing work. Whether it's a Wehrmacht



situations map showing the siege of Leningrad, a Japanese target map of Pearl Harbor, D-Day invasion plans or a map detailing Nazi death camps in Eastern Europe, all are powerfully evocative. Not least when one considers the people – the soldiers, generals, dictators and liberators – whose eyes scanned them for detail long before yours did. A must-have reference work for any history buff's bookshelf.



# I WAS A SPY!

**Writer:** Marthe McKenna (Foreword by Sir Winston Churchill)

**Publisher:** Pool of London **Price:** £12.99

**Released:** Out now (original edition published in 1932)

A BRILLIANT FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT OF THE CAREER OF ONE OF THE GREATEST SPIES OF WORLD WAR I

Marthe McKenna's account of her employment as a British spy during World War I is a tale of incredible courage and fortune. A trainee nurse at the time of the arrival of the "grey wave" of German invaders in Belgium, McKenna readily turned her hand to espionage, with devastating effect. Written at an electric pace, her cunning endeavours flash across the pages in a thrilling diary of life in the shadows of war.

From plotting the destruction of railways and enemy infantry to spiriting injured POWs back to their lines, McKenna's is an unremitting adventure. The ingenious sabotaging of a German ammunitions dump is a particular highlight. Descriptions of German brutality are often included throughout the book as McKenna seeks to justify the actions she's taking.

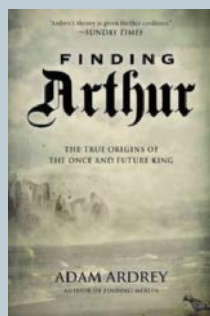
On numerous occasions the unexpected appearance of a German officer raises the heart rate as an impromptu interrogation threatens to unravel everything. While the ease with which McKenna transforms into a spy is a little too seamless as to be completely believable, and the language often attributed to people enduring the strain of war a little too formal and structured as to be completely accurate, a superior personal account of life as a spy is difficult to imagine.

The cruel irony of her role as a nurse tending to the wounded Germans that she has striven to kill alone makes this a gripping read. Her willingness to fraternize with high-ranking German military figures in the pursuit of vital information adds a further layer of intrigue. Overall, this is a highly recommended read.

## ALL ABOUT HISTORY RECOMMENDED READING

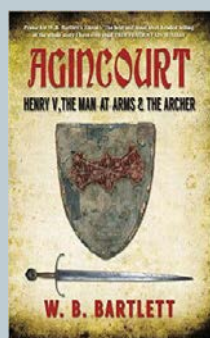
### FINDING ARTHUR: THE TRUE ORIGINS OF THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING

We know the character of King Arthur as the quintessential English king. Yet activist and writer Adam Ardrey seeks to turn this image on its head by proposing that the real Arthur actually ruled in Scotland sometime in the 7th century.



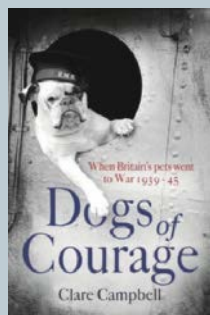
### AGINCOURT: HENRY V, THE MAN-AT-ARMS AND THE ARCHER

On the 600th anniversary of the battle, WB Bartlett has penned an excellent and thorough account of the lead up to the day and the battle, exploring the years before Henry's ascension and his road to Agincourt in as much detail as the climactic event itself.



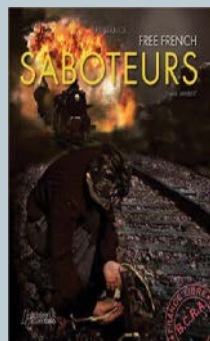
### DOGS OF COURAGE

There is a dog-shaped hole in our documentation of WWI, and Clare Campbell attempts to fill it with this in-depth look at the role of man's best friend in the conflict. This is a well-researched account of the brave pups that went to war.



### FREE FRENCH SABOTEURS

Franck Lambert provides an incredible insight into the operations of the French Resistance. Thousands of pieces of photographic evidence detail the saboteurs' activity, from their early missions up to their involvement in the D-Day landings.



# FIGHTERS IN THE SHADOWS

**Writer:** Robert Gildea **Publisher:** Faber and Faber **Price:** £20 **Released:** Out now

AN ALTERNATE LOOK INTO THE TRUTH BEHIND THE FABLED FRENCH RESISTANCE OF WWII

Unlike its contemporaries, *Fighters In The Shadows* is a detailed attempt to deconstruct the long-believed myth of an instantaneous and unrelenting French Resistance against the German stranglehold of 1940-44.

While dedicating many pages to the bravery of men such as Jean 'Rex' Moulin, as well as a full chapter to the huge contributions of France's women to the struggle, Gildea is quick to highlight the apathy and disunity prevalent within wartime France and most of its colonial empire.

The overwhelming sense of relief that gripped the nation upon the signing of the Armistice, along with the sense of pride or shame that actually motivated the rebellious minorities, provide the reader with a refreshing new prism with which to view the French under occupation. Gildea deserves great credit for examining this hitherto neglected narrative.

The palpable sense of danger that the resisters faced is woven throughout the book. From stunning mass arrests to poisonous betrayals from within, the unpredictable and often savage world of resistance is laid bare.

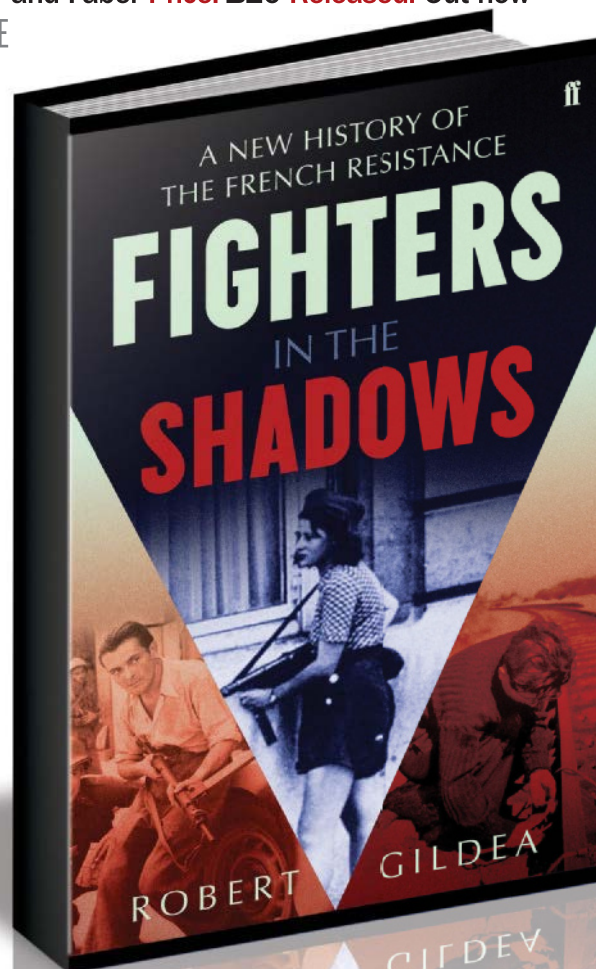
An egotistical competition among the male leaders of the Resistance movement, all vying to progress private political agendas, is a fascinating read. So too the notion that their female counterparts viewed their fight as being as much against gender stereotypes as fascism.

From start to finish, Gildea comprehensively dispels the idea of a unified people against oppression, while attempting to highlight the contribution of others to France's liberation.

The famous cry of France's exiled President Charles de Gaulle – "Paris liberated! Liberated by its own efforts," – is challenged by the sacrifices of Spanish anti-fascists and Polish Jews finally brought to light in this book.

Justice is also bestowed upon parties such as the communists, who bled as freely as the foreign and French fighters in the battle against Germany. De Gaulle's inability to ignite the fire that he called for as his diplomatic colleagues refused to rally to him, along with the internal strife that ravished the colonies, is testament to the fact that France simply could not co-ordinate a major attack on her invaders without external aid.

Meticulously researched, with a wealth of personal accounts and statistics, this book is inevitably heavy going in parts. The extent to which Gildea records even the most innocuous



meetings and events can sometimes make it difficult to appreciate the importance of many of the recollections within the wider context of the war.

Even so, this is a powerful rebuke against the now-wearied mythology that has shrouded this period of French history. From the initial acceptance of German rule via a puppet Vichy government to the euphoria of the American landings in North Africa that heralded the guerrilla warfare commonly associated with the Resistance, Gildea brings the reader's attention to the shifting public mood in France throughout the war.

Eventually, France rose from the ashes of a devastating defeat to help cast off the yoke of Hitler's war machine. Gildea should be applauded for helping us to realise that it was not always so up for the fight.

# WE WERE EAGLES VOLUME FOUR

**Writer:** Martin W Bowman **Publisher:** Amberley **Price:** £20 **Released:** Out now

THE THRILLING FINAL INSTALMENT OF THE SERIES TRACKING THE US EIGHTH AIR FORCE'S BOMBING CAMPAIGN OVER GERMANY THROUGH WWII

The strategic aerial bombing of Germany during World War II remains one of the most controversial campaigns in history. There is scant evidence that it did much to shorten the conflict – as was claimed at the time – while the damage it inflicted on Germany's civilian population and its cities is considered criminal in some quarters.

Because of this controversy, the contribution made by Allied bomber crews was for a long time overlooked. Recent books, however, have consistently argued that the men who prosecuted this aerial terror campaign were actually among the bravest of the war, while any blame for the crimes they may have committed ultimately lies with the politicians who sent them.

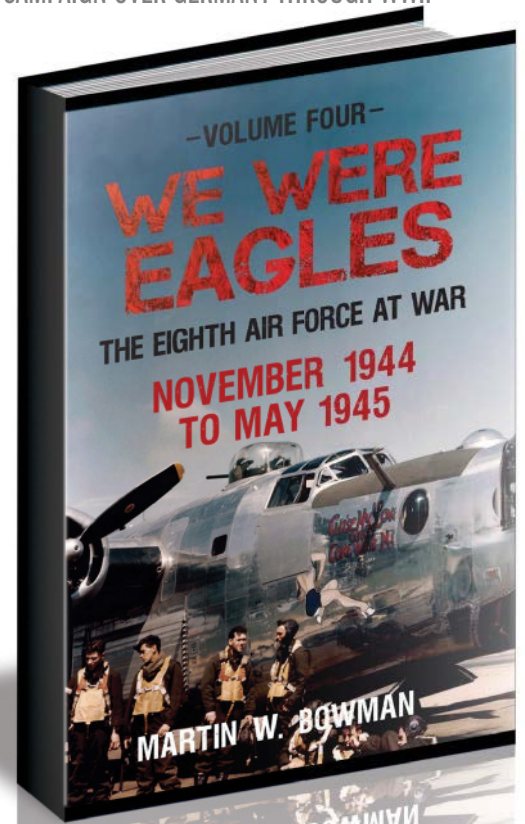
Volume four of *We Were Eagles* is the final part of Martin W Bowman's attempt to set the record straight with regards to the bravery of the US airmen who fought in the campaign. It deals with the final stages of the conflict, from November 1944 to the capture of Berlin by Soviet forces in May the following year. This period saw the closing act of the war in Europe, witnessing as it did the fighting retreat of Nazi forces back towards Germany's borders, Hitler's last offensive during the winter of 1944-

45 – the Battle of the Bulge – the infamous bombing of Dresden, and the eventual collapse of the Third Reich.

By this time, the Eighth Air Force had been flying bombing missions over Nazi-occupied Europe for two and half years. Unlike their counterparts in RAF Bomber Command, who always flew under cover of darkness, the Americans attacked during the day. Targets were more visible from the air during the day, so the logic went, but then so were lumbering bomber aircraft from the ground. By late 1944, the German fighter menace may have been largely eradicated – despite the appearance of the first German jet planes – but anti-aircraft fire could still punch a hole through the cabin, blow out an engine or hit the bomb load of a plane before it had even reached its target.

In short, it was still a highly risky business and Bowman does a superb job of showing us that. Weaving first-person accounts into his narrative, he puts us right in the shattered cockpits and gun turrets of the Flying Fortresses that the scared, superstitious and often teenage flyers toiled in, showing us their horrifying world first hand. Enthralling stuff.

**“Weaving first-person accounts into his narrative, he puts us right in the shattered cockpits”**



# THE ANGLO-SAXON AGE: THE BIRTH OF ENGLAND

**Writer:** Martin Wall **Publisher:** Amberley **Price:** £20 **Released:** Out Now

PUTTING THE ANGLO-SAXONS BACK ON THE MAP

Ever heard of the Staffordshire Hoard? It was this find of buried treasure that re-ignited Anglo-Saxon interest in history enthusiast Martin Wall. In this book, he seeks to tell the story of this often-forgotten people and how they helped shape the country that would become England.

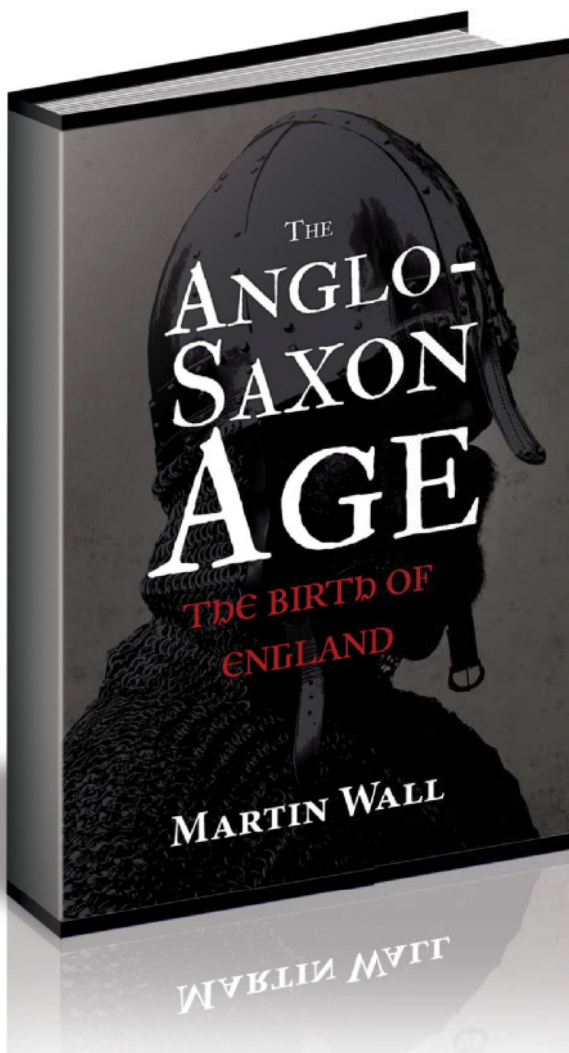
The book begins with the decline and collapse of Roman Britain that leads to the Anglo-Saxons stepping up to fill the power vacuum left in their wake. The story is nearly wrapped up with the Norman conquest of 1066, highlighted by the author as a particularly brutal period of English history.

Although warfare took up the majority of an Anglo-Saxon king's time, there is more to learn. Wall gives an insight into their integration with the native Britons and explores DNA evidence that can show that people today might not be so different to someone of that time.

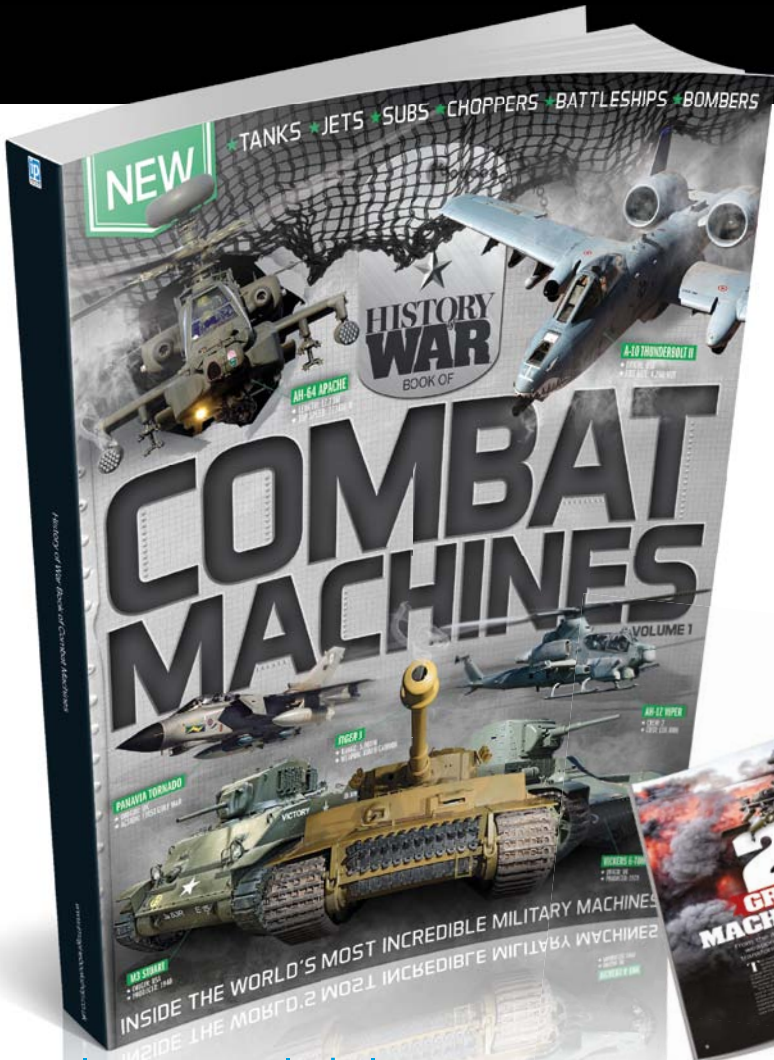
As the Staffordshire Hoard was the inspiration for the book, Wall highlights the

often overlooked kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons like Mercia and Northumbria. As a welcome addition to the narrative, and providing a little more flavour to his writing, Wall provides some colour photos and illustrations. While not numerous, they do help the reader visualise the landscapes being described.

When reading this book, get ready to be bombarded with names of people and places, many that are hard to pronounce. While this could be very off-putting, Wall has the advantage of being a keen amateur, not a professor, which makes his writing style lighter and more accessible. For the reader, it means that the information is easily digestible and certainly less daunting than perhaps a more standard history might be. All in all, Martin Wall presents a broad book that, by highlighting the social, religious and cultural aspects of the Anglo-Saxons, tells us their fascinating story. A fitting tribute to the founders of a nation.



From the makers of **HISTORY WAR**

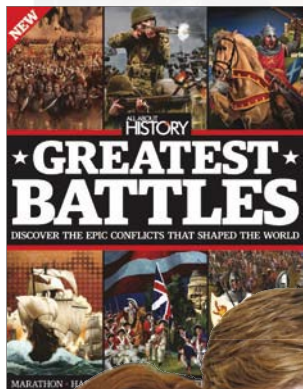


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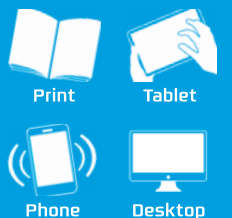
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Distributed in the UK, Eire and ROW by: Marketforce, 5 Churchill

Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU

☎ 0203 787 9060

Distributed in Australia by: Network Services (a division of Bauer

Media Group), Level 21 Civic Tower, 66-68 Goulburn Street,

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IMAGINE  
PUBLISHING

ISSN 2054-376X  
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# THE CORBRIDGE HOARD

One of the most significant Roman finds gives an insight into what a legionary's armour looked like

**A**s the Romans struggled to maintain their presence in what is now Scotland, a wall was erected to protect the northern border of Roman Britain. After the last legionaries left British shores in about 410, Hadrian's Wall became one of the best places in the UK to unearth Ancient Roman culture.

The nearby village of Corbridge contains a well-preserved list of objects more than 2,000 years old known as the Corbridge Hoard. When the site was first excavated, an iron-bound leather-covered wooden chest was found. Dating from between 122 and 138, much of the organic material had rotted away after being subterranean for centuries, but its contents remain and are preserved in excellent condition. The hoard includes tools and weaponry such as spearheads, ballista bolts and a scabbard, but the most impressive find is undoubtedly the armour.

A cuirass that will always be associated with the Roman war machine, lorica segmentata armour consisted of individual steel plates linked together by leather straps and buckles. The armour served the Roman Army well and was very popular within the ranks. It was worn by legionaries and centurions alike and protected them from barbarian broadswords until being replaced by chain mail in the latter days of the empire. The hoard also includes hair pins, combs, pickaxes, saws, games boards, statues and pottery. This suggests how important Corbridge was as an outpost and supply base for legionaries until it was abandoned when the Romans' grip on Britain began to crumble.

**English Heritage cares for more than 400 historic monuments, buildings and sites that bring the story of England to life for 10 million visitors each year. Find out more at [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk).**

*Above: The Corbridge Hoard is one of the most influential time capsules ever discovered in the UK*

**“THE ARMOUR SERVED THE ROMAN ARMY WELL AND WAS VERY POPULAR WITHIN THE RANKS”**

Image © English Heritage



# NEVER OVER BY CHRISTMAS



## Henry V

Famous for his victory at Agincourt, 600 years ago in 1415. Shakespeare gave Henry these famously stirring lines at the siege of the fortress of Harfleur, in Normandy, earlier in the campaign.



## Winstanley

Gerrard Winstanley was one of the English Diggers. In the English Civil War they demanded the abolition of private property and encouraged the poor to reclaim the commons for the people.



## Avro 504

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## WWII Eastern Front

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## The Desert Rats' Cromwell

A vehicle made famous by the British 7th Armoured Division, who had been dubbed the Desert Rats for their exploits in North Africa. However, the 7th Armoured were not issued with Cromwells until 1944, when they returned to the U.K. to prepare for D-Day. They fought in their Cromwells across France and into Germany, and eventually took part in the Victory Parade on September 7, 1945, in Berlin.

Development for the Cromwell first began in 1940 when the General Staff knew the Crusader would soon become obsolete. The tank was the fastest British tank to serve in the war, with a top speed of 40 mph (64 km/h). Its dual purpose 75 mm main gun had HE and armour-piercing capabilities and its armour ranged from 8 mm up to 76 mm overall.

In World of Tanks, you can command the Cromwell from the driver's seat. World of Tanks is an online PC game dedicated to tank warfare in the mid-20th century, with over 300 of history's most iconic tanks.

A variety of tiers, upgrades, equipment, and decals allow you to make each tank, your progression and your gameplay experience unique.

Play For Free at [Worldoftanks.eu](http://Worldoftanks.eu)



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